University of Alberta

Nature Premodern and Modern: Cultural Perceptions of Banff between 1800 and 1930

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores how cultural visions of the Banff area between 1800 and 1930 reflected several different sensibilities about nature and humanity. Three forms of perceiving nature sought to define the region during this period: the Native vision of the natural world as a sacred cosmos, the rationalist apprehension of nature as a constellation of exploitable natural resources, and the romantic understanding of creation as a spiritually charged and restorative sanctuary. The history of these distinct, though often inter-related, cultural visions of Banff provide an exemplary case study of the transformations of nature experiences accompanying the shift from a predominantly premodern vision of a place to a modern modality of consciousness. While reflecting these significant cross-cultural changes, the history of Banff also embodies the significant changes within English-Canadian culture as it moved from the deeply religious colonial society of the early nineteenth century to an increasingly secular nation by turn-of-the-century.

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Introduction

Nature occupies a privileged place in the Canadian imagination. The continuing importance of wilderness symbols such as the beaver, the maple leaf, and the vast emptiness of the Great White North testify to the symbolic power of the natural world in the historical development of the Canadian identity. Wilderness is, as one scholar puts it, the "*sine qua non* of what we have chosen to identify as Canadian culture."[1] I.S. MacLaren puts the matter rather more concisely: "Wilderness is us."[2] But for MacLaren, the relationship between wilderness and identity is not strictly a matter of romantic nationalism; perceptions of wilderness can provide profound insights into the ways in which cultures across times and places understand themselves. Images of nature and images of the human being–its nature and destiny–are reflexive. Cultural understandings of the Banff area between 1800 and 1930 manifest this thick layering of ideas about nature and humanity.[3] Three forms of nature perception sought to define the region during this period: the Native vision of the natural world as a sacred cosmos, the rationalist apprehension of the region as a constellation of natural resources for utilitarian purposes, and the romantic understanding of Banff and environs as a spiritually charged and restorative sanctuary. Each of these ways of knowing nature were married to–and shaped by–particular understandings of spatial, temporal, and existential experience. The history of these three distinct, though often inter-related, cultural visions in imagining the Banff area provide an exemplary case study of the transformations of nature experience accompanying the shift from a predominantly premodern vision of a place to a modern modality of consciousness. While reflecting these significant cross-cultural changes, from Stoney cultural conception to English-Canadian, premodern to modern, the history of Banff also embodies the significant changes within English-Canadian culture as it moved from the deeply religious colonial society of the early nineteenth century to an increasingly secular nation by turn-of-the-century.

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[1] John Wadland, "Wilderness and Culture," in *Consuming Canada: Readings in Environmental History*, ed. Chad Gaffield and Pam Gaffield (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1995), 14.

[2] I.S. MacLaren, "Cultured Wilderness in Jasper National Park" *Journal of Canadian Studies* 34, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 38.

[3] In this thesis, I use the term "Banff" to refer broadly to the townsite, the surrounding park, and the many attractions within the general vicinity, including Lake Louise.

This thesis explores how the Banff region was understood within the premodern conceptions of the Stoneys and within the religious, utilitarian, and romantic visions of modern English-Canadians. It also examines how this area was shaped and reshaped by the interplay between these impulses, being figured and refigured as a sacred site, a constellation of exploitable resources, and a sanctuary from the numbing excesses of modernity. The vision of Banff between the 1850s and the late 1870s was largely defined by the Stoneys, the principal inhabitants of the area, who possessed an essentially religious conception of the natural world. Within this vision, the divine defined time, space, and experience; through its periodic manifestations, the transcendent established particular seasons, places, plants, and animals as robust embodiments of a transhuman reality. The Stoneys' vision of Banff contrasts sharply with that of the English-Canadians who experienced the region between 1800 and 1930. Whereas the Stoneys shared a broad cultural consensus that all forms of apprehending creation were necessarily subsumed under a comprehensive religious vision, English-Canadians experienced nature through distinct and often conflicting religious, rationalist, and romantic traditions. During the pre-Confederation period in which the Canadian West remained overwhelmingly uncolonized by and largely unknown to English-Canadians, visitors to the region frequently employed the rhetoric of the sublime to articulate their experience of the Banff area as a place manifesting a visceral transhuman presence. Between the 1850s and the establishment of the Rocky Mountains Park in 1887, a more deeply anthropocentric vision of the Banff area developed as scientific and technological mastery over the area advanced dramatically. With the progressive, utilitarian ideology that informed these advances, nature was perceived in a disenchanted, rational manner, as a collection of resources to be catalogued and exploited. In the decades following the establishment of the park, this same anthropocentric ideology inspired a dramatic transformation of the natural world of Banff to accord with the cultural ideals and desires of English-Canadians. At the same time, the lack of a scientific, progressive vision among the Stoneys led to a substantial reshaping of the cultural world of Banff as the tribe's ability to engage in hunting and other activities within the park was continually eroded. Although utilitarianism had informed the establishment and administration of the Rocky Mountains Park, romanticism animated the marketing and consumption of the Banff area. Promotional materials for the park and visitors' accounts of their experiences between the 1880s and 1920s often contained trenchant critiques of what was perceived to be the crassly materialistic and anthropocentric character of utilitarianism. For the natural romantics who visited Banff, creation was an enchanted realm to be experienced sentimentally and existentially. Rejecting the ideology of progress associated with the scientific and technological conquest of nature, they looked back nostalgically to earlier stages of culture and revelled in nature's wildness, its spiritual character, and its capacity to restore the bodies and souls of weary urbanites.

Each cultural vision of Banff explored in this thesis provides significant insights into the ways in which culture shapes nature and nature in turn defines culture. The character of each vision at particular periods also speaks to the needs and challenges of Native people and English-Canadians during specific cultural moments. A sensitive exploration of the relationships between nature and culture in Banff between 1800 and 1930 allows us to perceive more clearly who Natives and English-Canadians were during this period and to understand with greater precision what our continuing tendency to define our nation by its nature means for contemporary Canadians.

Chapter 1: The Stoneys' Sacred Cosmos

Premodern Society in Banff

Humans have inhabited the area of present-day Banff National Park for millennia. Roughly 12,000 years ago, the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains formed an ice-free corridor between the massive Cordilleran and Laurentide glaciers. Archaeological work conducted in the early 1980s found evidence of human presence near Vermilion Lakes roughly 10,700 years ago. Senior Parks Canada archaeologist Gwyn Langemann concludes from the housepits and other archaeological material discovered in the area that the "Banff townsite has been the focus of occupation for a very long time, and a place where people from the west have met people from the plains."[4] Though the precise identity of these early inhabitants remains somewhat obscure, it seems likely that they bore some relation to the Interior Salish Indians, and that the housepits were temporary shelters employed by Natives gathering berries and medicinal herbs in the region prior to venturing onto the plains to hunt buffalo.

Evidence for tribal presence in the mountains attains greater clarity during the historical period. The Kootenay frequented the Banff region in the first half of the 1700s in their seasonal cycling between buffalo hunting in the grasslands and hunting and agricultural activity in the Columbia-Kootenay area. In the late eighteenth century, Peter Fidler and David Thompson noted that the Kootenay appear to have been displaced by the Peigan as the dominant tribal force in the Front Ranges of the Rockies. Though forced west across the mountains by the Peigan, the Kootenay continued to travel through the mountain passes and valleys. The Shuswap and the Snake also occasionally ventured to the eastern slopes of the Rockies.[5]

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[4] Gwyn Langemann, "A Description and Evaluation of Eight Housepit Sites in Banff National Park, Alberta," Canadian Archaeological Society, May, 1998, 2; qtd E.J. Hart, *The Place of Bows: Exploring the Heritage of the Banff-Bow Valley, Part I to 1930* (Banff: EJH Literary Enterprises Ltd., 1999), 11-12.

By the mid-nineteenth century, a new tribal presence–the Stoneys–had arrived in the Banff area. The Stoneys who became the primary inhabitants of the region that was to become, in 1885, Canada's first national park were originally part of the Sioux people who dwelt in present-day central Canada. At some point prior to 1640, the Stoneys (also known as the Nakoda or the Assiniboine) separated from the Sioux. In the generations following this schism, the Stoney people migrated west, arriving in the parkland and foothills east of the Rocky Mountains by the late 1700s and establishing themselves in the environs of present-day Banff National Park by the mid-1800s. The Stoneys' social organization resembled that of other Plains Indian tribes during the fur trade period in western Canada. The tribe was a nomadic hunter-gatherer society, moving seasonally through Alberta's biomes and relying upon the natural world to provide the necessities of life. Those living near the foothills and mountains hunted big game in the region and ventured onto the plains in the spring and autumn to pursue buffalo. They supplemented their diets with berries and employed a variety of animal and natural materials to create tools, clothing, weapons, medicines, and shelters. During their migration from eastern Canada, the Stoneys became allied with the Crees and came to command much of the intermediary commerce of the western Canadian fur trade between native trappers, on the one hand, and English-Canadian traders, on the other. They were frequently embroiled in the intertribal warfare that periodically erupted on the Prairies, and their oral histories are filled with tales of individual valour in battle. These basic patterns of the Stoneys' society had remained remarkably consistent, even after the arrival of Europeans; as Gerald Friesen points out, "... the natives' seasonal round existence, methods of child-rearing, transition to adulthood, hunting and trading expeditions, and material culture–the houses, food preparation and clothing that lay at the foundation of life–remained little altered by contact with Europeans."[6] Prior to the post-Confederation period and the mass immigration to, and settlement of, the Prairies, the Stoneys were able to retain much of the centuries-old rhythms and rituals of social life.

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[5] See Hart, *The Place of Bows*, for an excellent discussion of the historic Native presence in the Banff-Bow Valley area.

Premodern Consciousness

During the centuries prior to the arrival of Europeans in the New World, the basic modality of consciousness among the various tribal groups who inhabited the Banff region was premodern. Just as many Native communities' social organization remained largely intact in the centuries immediately following the introduction of Old World practices in North America, so too their premodern cultural understanding persisted long after its original exposure to European sensibilities. Although the Stoneys were some of the earliest converts to Christianity among the Plains tribes in Canada–Robert Rundle (1811-1896) had first evangelized the community in the 1840s and George McDougall (1821-1876) established a mission for them at Morleyville in the early 1870s–premodern oral traditions and rituals remained an essential part of their cultural fabric between the 1850s, when they established themselves in Banff, and the late 1870s and 1880s, when they took treaty and were displaced to reserves.[7] Though no doubt vitiated by the massive transformations in western Canada since the late nineteenth century, premodern cultural beliefs and practices persist among contemporary Stoney elders, many of whom are devout Christians.[8]

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[6] Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 22.

[7] This thesis focuses on the nature of Stoney culture during this pre-settlement period between the 1850s and the late 1870s.

In premodern consciousness, the world is infused with the Holy, figured as a personal God or a Great Spirit or any of the lesser divinities that inhabit the human world.[9] Creation originates from and testifies to the presence and power of the Holy or what Rudolf Otto called the *mysterium tremendum*.[10] Although this dreadful and awesome mystery penetrates and defines all being, it is not everywhere apparent in the human realm. Humans glimpse the Holy through periodic irruptions of the sacred into the profane or mundane world of human time and space. These irruptions of the sacred (theophanies) annul the homogeneity of the spatial and temporal fields and establish particular moments and places as meeting grounds of the limited with the Absolute. Locuses of ultimate reality, suffused with mystery and power, such fields become both spiritual and physical centres for the religious individual and culture. They create essential markers of spatial, temporal, and existential orientation. Theophanies thus function as "world founders," creating the foundational structures of perception at the heart of the shared consciousness of premodern communities.

For North America's premodern Native population, the Holy manifested itself in and through the natural world. The divine revealed itself to humanity in the myriad aspects of the created world–the flora and fauna, the landforms and bodies of water, the sky and the soil. Creation was suffused with a palpable, primal sacrality that manifested itself most fully in certain revelatory beings and sites: "For native North Americans the numinous world of nature beings was always very close, and the land itself expressed their presence. Indian people created religious geographies in which specific sites were inhabited by sacred powers and persons."[11] The nature beings and the spiritual geographies they inhabited were married to a liturgical calendar punctuated by those periods of the seasonal round in which the divine was experienced most vividly. Premodern communities will continually re-enact the various theophanies which have founded their world in the consecrated times and places associated with these revelations. The annual repetition of rituals at particular points of the year create the community's alternating rhythms of sacred and profane time just as the spatial configurations of homogeneous, profane space and revelatory, sacred places form the communal consciousness of space. Through the narrative reiteration and ritual re-enactment of theophanies, premodern communities create and re-create the worlds of spiritual and existential meaning that were founded in the sacred time and place of revelation. Thus, the dialogue between divine and human begun through a theophany continues, and is ever recreated and renewed throughout each generation. In this way, the sacrality of the world is affirmed and maintained by premodern communities. The consciousness of an all-encompassing and eternal sacrality formed an ordered and meaningful cosmos that integrated premodern people with their surroundings and with the Holy. Within this form of cultural understanding, the individual was subordinate to the social and human society was subordinate to divine reality.

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[8] Though little systematic study of the tribe's particular cultural vision has been attempted, it remains possible to assemble a plausible, though somewhat limited, portrait of the community's historic religious culture through an analysis of comparative religion scholarship, contemporary selections from the Stoneys myths, legends, and folklore, and accounts of the tribe's ritual life.

[9] The following analysis is heavily indebted to the thought of Mircea Eliade, Rudolf Otto, and their followers in comparative religion scholarship.

[10] Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, trans. John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

The Holy at the heart of the Stoneys' sacred cosmos was *Waka Taga*, the ever-present and ubiquitous spiritual force that generates, suffuses, and imparts a rhythm to creation. Edwin Thompson Denig (1812-1853), a nineteenth-century fur trader in the Upper Missouri River area, wrote of the Assiniboine's supreme divinity: "They think Wakonda pervades all air, earth, and sky; that it is in fact omnipresent and omnipotent... ."[12] Contemporary elders of the tribe speak of *Waka Taga* as "the Great Mystery ... who is the source and the origin of all life and all being."[13] Though entirely other in its ineffability and omnipotence, *Waka Taga* nonetheless is understood to have entered into intimate relationship with the chosen people, the Stoneys, and to have created for them the good things of the world: "the red earth, the sacred wind, mountain air, good sun, much warmth, and many horned and antlered herds."[14] In these beneficent dispensations and in other beings and processes of the natural world, the Stoneys perceived the active workings of *Waka Taga*. Through ritual, story, and prayer, the tribe worshiped this holy mystery and entered into the theophanic times and places that had made their world sacred. The Stoneys' reverence for the Rocky Mountains and the Banff hot springs, their profound existential relationships with animals, and their Sun dance ritual all manifest their premodern apprehension of Nature and the divine reality that it embodies.

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[11] Catherine L. Albanese, *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 21.

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[12] Edwin Thompson Denig, *The Assiniboine*, ed. J.N.B. Hewitt, introd. David R. Miller (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2000), 92.

[13] Sebastian Chumak, *The Stories of Alberta: An Illustrated Heritage of Genesis, Myths, Legends, Folklore and Wisdom of Yahey Wichastabi, the People-Who-Cook-With-Hot-Stones*, trans. Alfred Dixon, Jr. (Calgary: The Alberta Foundation, 1983), 26. It should be pointed out that the translation of *Waka Taga* as "Great Mystery" is not without its critics. William K. Powers points out that among Plains Indians, "the term supreme being usually designates the total of all supernatural beings and powers in the tribal universe. Thus the Lakota word *wakantanka*, most often translated as 'Great Mystery' or 'Great Spirit,' more accurately means 'most sacred' and symbolizes sixteen separate entities in the Lakota belief system" (Powers, "The Plains," in *Native American Religions: North America*, ed. Lawrence E. Sullivan [New York: Macmillan, 1989], 23).

[14] Ibid., 26.

Theophanies and Sacred Places

For the Stoneys, the places and times of the natural world were generated by *Waka Taga* and animated by the Great Mystery's presence. The tribe viewed nature–plants, animals, landforms–as creations, emissaries, and embodiments of the divine. As Jordan Paper notes, whereas in Western religious understanding, "the earth itself is not sacred; it is created by the sacred, by God," in the Native North American religious vision, "the landscape is sacred; it is deity."[15] While nature was understood as being suffused with the divine, certain places were differentiated from this homogeneously sacred space by their manifestation of a more robust and vividly manifest sacrality.

Through the cultural acknowledgment, narration, and ritualization of these sacred places, the Stoneys developed a rich spiritual geography of the Banff region that encompassed a range of sites, some associated with evil spirits and peril, others connected to life-giving medicines and restoration. The consciousness of these sites defined the particular character of places within the Stoneys' sacred cosmos.

The Stoneys' sacred geography was articulated through the wealth of legends, myths, and folklore that spoke of the divine presence in particular places. The mundane world had been marked by the Holy, and the places touched by the divine had become sites pregnant with ontological and moral meaning. The Stoneys' oral tradition contained rich and varied accounts of places of divine presence. The Holy in these narratives was figured in animal spirits and landforms, as well as in the complex figure of *Iktomni*–a trickster, culture hero, and semi-divine co-creator with *Waka Taga*. These stories contained etiological, moral, and ontological elements. Etiological elements explained the divine origins of certain features of the natural world, moral elements offered prescriptions for behaviour rooted in the emulation or rejection of transhuman models, and ontological elements both offered insights into the workings of the divine in the natural world and illuminated places of powerful medicine.

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[15] Jordan Paper, "Landscape and Sacred Space in Native American Religion," in *Perspectives of Canadian Landscape: Native Traditions*, ed. Joan M. Vastokas (North York, ON : Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, York University, 1990), 44.

These threads were often interwoven in the Stoneys' oral tradition, although certain narratives possessed greater emphasis upon the etiological, moral, or ontological dimensions of a story. One strongly etiological myth recounts how *Iktomi* fell asleep upon a large rock and was swarmed by mosquitoes in his slumber. The Stoneys believed that the "red mark" of the mosquito-ravaged body of *Iktomi* could still be seen on a stone near the Porcupine Hills.[16] The deeply moral myth of Pretty Feathers speaks of how this cannibalistic monster had been buried in a cave near Ghost Lake. The spectral presence of Pretty Feathers remained an accursed reality at the site, and the place evoked for Stoneys the moral horrors of this ghostly figure's deeds.[17] Narratives with a strongly ontological emphasis abounded; indeed, much of the Stoneys' body of myths, legends, and folklore spoke of how divine presence had created places of strong medicine in the tribe's cosmos. Among these sites was Vermilion Springs. The red mud at the springs was perceived as a gift from an unknown spiritual presence that would occasionally manifest in a sound "like a flute, an Indian flute, a whistle, and singing." The crimson earth "seem[ed] to give life" to those decorated with it. The Stoneys showed their gratitude to the spirit of the place with offerings of tobacco, pipes, rings, and incense.[18] The body of Stoney oral wisdom thus defined the tribe's sacred geography by communicating and reinforcing cultural understandings of places radiating both the vividness of the supreme Being and the death-dealing powers of non-being. Narratives of the divine presence provided the Stoneys with a thickly layered, rich appreciation for the moral, existential, and cosmological significance of the sacred cosmos that they inhabited.

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[16] Chumak, 88.

[17] Chumak, 174. As the story of Pretty Feathers makes clear, manifestations of the Holy could be unpredictable, even hostile. Lake Minnewanka–literally the "Water of the Spirits"–was viewed with deep trepidation as a place associated in historic memory with strange, half-human, half-fish beings and the sounds of drum songs and spirit voices. According to Stoney Enoch Baptiste, when an "Indian boy" was killed at the lake during the construction of a dam, the tragedy was imputed by some Stoneys to the vengeful actions of the water spirits, angered at the destruction of nearby trees. See Ella Elizabeth Clark, *Indian Legends of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), 97-98.

The Rocky Mountains of the Banff area held a special significance in the Stoneys' consciousness of their environment. The tribe believed that the "great Shining Rocky Mountains" were "the Stoney ancestors turned into stone and boulder and rock."[19] Blood relatives and historical beings, the ancestors had left this world and drawn close to the Great Mystery; they thus possessed an identity that married the mundane human world and the divine realm of the spirits. This vision of the Rockies is typical of premodern apprehensions of mountains. As Mircea Eliade points out, for premodern people a sacred mountain is an "*axis mundi* connecting earth with heaven .... [it] is holy ground, *because it is the place nearest to heaven*, because from here ... it is possible to reach heaven.... ."[20] Unsurprisingly, many of the central divinities of the Stoneys' pantheon were understood to inhabit the mountains. The Chinook Wind, warmer on the eastern slopes of the mountains, was believed to originate from the sacred caves in the mountains, and the restorative hot springs on Sulphur

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[18] Marius Barbeau, *Indian Days on the Western Prairies* (Ottawa : Dept. of Northern Affairs and National Resources, National Museum of Canada, 1960), 209.

[19] Chumak, 136. Fr. Pierre-Jean De Smet noted the Stoneys' great regard for the ancestors: "The Assiniboines esteem greatly a religious custom of assembling once or twice in the year around the tombs of their immediate relatives.... .The Indians call the dead by their names, and offer them meats carefully dressed, which they place beside them." P.-J. De Smet, *Western Missions and Missionaries: A Series of Letters* (1859; Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972), 138.

[20] Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harcourt, 1987), 38-39.

Mountain were viewed as the dwelling place of a beneficent spirit who offered healing medicine to the Stoney people. Animal spirits like eagle, deities like *Mu* (thunder), and the god-man *Iktomi* were all frequently linked to the Rockies. Revered for their vital association with the memory and living reality of the ancestors, and venerated for the spiritual presences manifest there, the Rockies were also a place of the future, the site to which male initiates would journey on a vision quest to seek their destinies in life. The mountains thus both participated in the tribe's vision of the sacred cosmos and represented a crown jewel of that vision, a place uniquely favoured for the spirits that resided there. Chief John Snow (1933-2006) describes the Rockies as "a place of hope, a place of vision, a place of refuge, a very special and holy place where the Great Spirit speaks with us."[21] Past, present, and future, sacred and mundane were united in the mountains–place of ancestors, of destiny, of spirits, of humans, the meeting place of the heavenly and earthly worlds.

The Rockies as Place of Vision Quests

Particularly prominent visually and spiritually within the Stoneys' sacred cosmos, the Rockies were places of religious pilgrimage for the tribe. Early in their lives, perhaps as an initiation into manhood, young Stoney men would fast and pray, participate in a sacred lodge ceremony, and then journey into the mountains alone to seek a vision. We can imagine the initiate, weakened and wearied by intense fasting and the ceremonial rigours of the lodge, approaching the dwelling place of the Great Mystery, the superabundant source of power and wisdom, with fear and trembling. The pilgrim sought in the mountains a vision of an animal spirit or other divinity that would imbue him with a particular form of medicine that provided him an identity and a power. The mountains were thus a liminal place between youth and manhood. If blessed during his solitary journey to the mountains by a vision or a sign, the initiate was granted a definite spiritual identity and social role for his adult life. This assignment of an identity was particularly clear for those who received the sign to become medicine men. As Chief Snow puts it, the candidate to become a medicine man "learned of his selection by a sign which could not be misunderstood or denied. With this vision came much understanding, a direction for the future, and a change in the individual's personality, which made it clear to all that this individual had been touched by the Creator's hand. None recognized the new candidate better than the old men of wisdom."[22] The journey into the sacred mountains was understood as an encounter with *Waka Taga* and could result in radical change for those who undertook it.

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[21] Chief John Snow, *These Mountains are Our Sacred Places* (Toronto: Samuel Stevens, 1977), 13.

The experience of the mountains as a place of spiritual pilgrimage is vividly embodied in the life history of one of the tribe's greatest medicine men and healers, Hector Crawler (d. 1933). Crawler is reputed to have had numerous profound and mystical experiences in the mountains. One account of his life suggests that after a deep depression of two years, Crawler was compelled by a dream vision to visit the peak of Rock Mountain, near Lake Minnewanka. It is said that this quest to the mountain occurred during the annual Sun dance, the ritual that encapsulated the Stoneys' vision of creation's journey through birth, death, and rebirth.[23] Crawler fasted, meditated, and prayed on the mountain, and was gifted with spiritual insight and the gift of healing.[24] Those who encountered him after his transformational experience "say that the emaciated creature who came down the mountain barely resembled the Calf Child [another name for Crawler] who had set out."[25] His vision and the gift of healing had essentially changed Crawler's outer aspect and inner being. Throughout his life, Crawler frequently went to the mountains for solitude and communion with the spirits. He spoke of one mystical experience in which he was transported to the "top of the very highest mountain, Tcasehtinda (Falling-timber-Plane-Mountain), Kananaskis," and encountered the "Son of God" who gifted him with healing powers.[26] At times melding Christian with traditional Stoney religious images and ideas, Crawler's experiences express powerfully the religious import of the Rockies in his people's sacred consciousness.

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[22] Ibid., 7.

[23] John Laurie, *The Stony Indians of Alberta: Volume I*, unpublished MS, 1957-59, Glenbow Archives 4390, 113.

[24] Ibid., 109-16. In another account of Crawler's conversion, Norman Luxton claims that it was a secluded, visionary encounter with the mountains' elfish beings that began him on the path to being a healer. In both cases, Crawler's healing powers are believed to have originated with a mountain pilgrimage. See Barbeau, 115-16.

The Banff hot springs also served as a pilgrimage site. Like those at Vermilion Springs, the waters of Sulphur Mountain were associated "in the early days before the white man came" with the ethereal sounds of singing and shrill tones like those made by "the bone whistles ... use[d] at a Sun dance."[27] Ascribed to spirits of the water possessing strong medicine, the springs were a place of restoration and healing for the Stoneys. The tribe believed that illness, broadly conceived, represented a disharmony within an individual's relationship to the cosmos; certain sites, like the springs, were viewed as places where the fabric of this relationship could be restored and people's fragmentation could be healed. As one scholar puts it, "[t]he material world was a holy place; and so harmony with nature beings and natural forms was the controlling ethic, reciprocity the recognized mode of interaction. Ritual functioned to restore a lost harmony, like a great balancing act bringing the people back to right relation with the world."[28] After consultations with a medicine man or woman, Stoneys would fast and pray before journeying to the springs.[29] There they would perform rituals and pray to the spirits of the waters. After bathing, they "would drop something in the water as a sacrifice, as a thank-you to the spirits for the use of their water or the use of their paint, the yellow ochre."[30] The pilgrimage to the springs was thus a journey to a divine dwelling place, to a manifestation of the source of all being. Through an encounter with the reality of the springs, Stoneys attempted to reconcile themselves to their own natures and the cosmos.

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[25] Laurie, 113.

[26] Barbeau, 113-14.

[27] Clark, 95-96.

Given the Stoneys' belief in the restorative, life-giving spirits that inhabited the springs, it is not surprising that Chief Walking Buffalo (1871-1967), one of the tribe's great medicine men, is said to have received his life's vocation from a dream buffalo just after bathing in the waters of the Sulphur Mountain springs and thereby being purified in mind and spirit. The dream spirit in his vision told him that "the Great Spirit put you on earth to help other people, just as he put the buffalo on the earth to help human beings." It then showed him how to adorn his tepee with powerful symbols, taught him a buffalo song and a dance, and gave him a buffalo skull to be placed at the bottom of the central pole of the Sun dance lodge. The chief became mystically identified with the buffalo spirit and came to possess the animal's powerful medicine: "And so the buffalo has been my source of strength. It has given me the power to heal sick people."[31] Chief Walking Buffalo's experience encapsulates the salient features of encounters at sacred places: preparation through purification, illumination by mystical vision, and, subsequently, transformation of one's mode of existence. Like other medicine men gifted with visitations from animal spirits, the chief became a being capable of moving across the fluid boundaries between the human and the animal, the mundane and the divine.

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[28] Albanese, 23. Albanese uses the term "nature beings" here to refer to both plants and animals.

[29] It remains unclear whether these kinds of pilgrimages were undertaken by both genders or if only by men.

[30] Clark, 96.

[31] Ibid., 132-33.

Animal Spirits and the Dialogue Between the Stoneys and Creation

As Chief Walking Buffalo's life story makes clear, animals held a particularly prominent place in the Stoneys' religious consciousness. In Stoney mythology, animal spirits serve as both emissaries and embodiments of the divine, offering gifts for both the Stoneys' physical nourishment and their spiritual guidance and empowerment. Buffalo, for instance, serves *Waka Taga* by giving its "brown-earth body to the Stonies so that they may eat [its] prairie-reddened heart and celebrate [its] spirit, so that they may grow."[32] Animals were spiritual beings, imbued by *Waka Taga* with the same sanctity as that possessed by the Stoney people. Like their human brethren, the animals of Stoney mythology have personalities; they speak, scheme, guide, counsel, cajole. Their relationship with humans is dialogical, rooted in an ontological exchange in which, as the Christian tradition puts it, "deep speaks unto deep"– the essence of the divine encounters its reflection. The ontological kinship of human and animal is expressed in Stoney stories in several ways: through the power of animal spirits to define human vocations, through the capacity of both animals and humans to assume the form and being of the other, through cross-species sexual unions and the development of kinship ties and ancestral lines that marry animal and human. Chief John Snow echoes this intimate familiarity: "We called the animals our brothers. They understood our language; we, too, understood theirs."[33] Within the Stoneys' cultural understanding, there was no strict separation between animal and human; the nature of these two forms of being bled into each other.

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[32] Chumak, 112.

The relational conception of animal and human is perhaps best expressed in the hunt. For the Stoneys, hunting was a ritual process of propitiating animals and petitioning them to sacrifice their lives for the tribe. George Colpitts concisely summarizes the spiritual context for Plains hunters:

> Amerindians ... believed that in season and in the right place animals gave themselves up to the hunters. They believed that animals were really spirits that "donned fleshly robes from time to time for human benefits" and that their actions as hunters were judged within this spiritual dimension, the "manitou" world of animals. This animistic belief led some Amerindians, particularly on the plains, to believe that animals were superabundant. Plains people believed that the buffalo herds, which seemed to be beyond number, came from the ground each season. From the same perspective, the hunter respected every opportunity to hunt an animal that made itself available. He also remained thankful to the animal and respected numerous traditions when he butchered, consumed, and sometimes disposed of the animal's remains.[34]

The Sun dance ritual was understood as essential to ensure that the cosmos was renewed at the end of each world-year and that the buffalo herds came from the ground each season. The religiosity of the hunt itself is manifest in the prominence of the medicine man in ritual, the significance of prayer and other forms of spiritual practice, and the role of religious objects in locating animals. A scholar of Assiniboine buffalo hunts describes the hunting ritual:

> The medicine person responsible for the hunting rituals set up a buffalo-calling pole at the center of the corral; to this pole were attached pieces of brightly colored cloth, tobacco, and the horn of a buffalo. At the corral this ritual director fasted while he

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[33] Snow, 3.

[34] George Colpitts, *Game in the Garden: A Human History of Wildlife in Western Canada to 1940* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), 28. One cannot help but wonder if the belief in "superabundance" and the chthonic creation of the buffalo, when married to the technology of the gun and the mobility of the horse, played a significant role in the demise of the great herds of Plains buffalo.

> sang, beat his drum, and sought powerful visions. The scouts that were searching for the animals carried with them a ball of buffalo hair, which provided them with additional power to locate the game. When the buffalo were found, the buffalo-hair ball was sent back to the shaman, and the animals were usually successfully driven into the corral.[35]

The buffalo hunt was not conceived of as a chase, but rather as a kind of spiritual dance, a religious dialogue of call and response between shaman and animal. The hunt was a kind of covenantal relationship in which the Stoneys performed their ritual obligations and offered to the buffalo their prayers and supplications. If satisfied ritually, if properly courted, the buffalo would submit to the powerful spiritual medicine of the hunters, offering up its "brown-earth body to the Stonies so that they may eat [its] prairie-reddened heart and celebrate [its] spirit, so that they may grow."[36]

The Sundance: The Re-creation of the Cosmos

Just as the Stoneys perceived the presence and power of *Waka Taga* in the places and beings of the natural world, so too they saw apprehended the Great Mystery in the temporal realities of the creation. The tribe perceived the divine's active workings in the rhythms of creation's seasonal transformations. Each year was conceived of as a world; with each annual cycle, one world passed away and a new world was born. The passage of the world through the year was manifest in nature's endlessly repeated journey through birth, decay, death, and rebirth. The Stoneys metaphorically expressed their experience of the world's annual journey through the symbol of the closed circle. Divided temporally into the four seasons and spatially into the four cardinal directions, the closed circle embodied the tribe's sacred cosmos.[37] At the centre of the circle was *Waka Taga*, the source and sustainer of the world-year. Each lunar month within the seasonal round revealed different aspects and intensities of the being of *Waka Taga*. January, the Hard Frost Moon, was the time when the sap of the cottonwood tree froze and the bone marrow of the moose became juicy. During May, the Moon-of-Everything-is-Green, the wildflowers bloom, Bear wakes from his slumber, and the deer grow fat. September, Turning-of-the-Leaves-Moon, begins the seven moons of winter; this month is rutting season for elk and the time for blueberries and loganberries to ripen.[38] Tribal myths, legends, and folklore, by almost invariably beginning with a statement of the lunar moon in which the events narrated occurred, impart to each moment in the annual revolution its distinctive ontological and moral character in the Stoneys' cultural understanding. The tribe's lunar calendar thus revealed different aspects and intensities of the being of *Waka Taga*; during certain periods–like the lush months of spring and summer–the Stoneys experienced more deeply the vital presence of the Great Spirit. Reflective of the generative power and wisdom of *Waka Taga*, the procession of the months was also part of the Great Mystery's beneficent design for the Stoney people. The seasonal changes of the world, by making possible the continuation of the people's hunter-gatherer society, provided annually-replenished stocks of buffalo on the plains and big game in the Rockies and foothills, fur-bearing animals along the rivers and in the forests, and berries and other medicinal plants in the bush. The Stoneys worshipped the mysterious workings of *Waka Taga* in the seasonal cycle through the various celebrations of their liturgical year.

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[35] Howard L. Harrod, *The Animals Came Dancing: Native American Sacred Ecology and Animal Kinship* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2000), 101.

[36] Chumak, 112.

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[37] The image of the circle and the symbolism of the number four figures prominently in Stoney cosmogony as well as in the tribe's more general symbology. Stoney oral wisdom speaks, for instance, of the Four Winds, the Four Keepers of the Four Winds, the Four Seasons, the Four Cardinal Directions, The Four Colours, the Four Great Paths.

[38] Ibid., 254-55.

The pre-eminent ritual of the Stoneys' liturgical year was the Sun dance, a cosmogonic ceremony that marked the death of one world-year and the birth of another. As with other premodern people, the Stoneys perceived in the ritual re-iteration of the transcendent, generative mystery of creation a drawing close to "the *supreme divine manifestation*, the paradigmatic act of strength, superabundance, and creativity."[39] The significance of the ritual was evident in the grave solemnity with which it was observed: John Laurie notes that the "late Chief Enos Hunter and others have frequently insisted that any gross breach of behaviour [during the ritual period] was, in pre-whiteman days, punished by death."[40] Preparations for the Sun dance would begin months prior to the ritual, and involved intensive fasting and prayer. The organizer of the ritual vowed to lead "an honest, good life for six months before the dance is held and ... for six months afterwards."[41] These religious observances were intended to purify a Stoney man of the accumulated spiritual fatigue of the year that was passing in order that he might be born anew at the initiation of the year to come.[42] The Sun dance took place near the end of June, close to the summer solstice, at a time known by the Stoneys as Sprouting-of-the-Seeds-Moon. At this point the natural world expresses its great fecundity and the Ruler of the Sacred Herbs, *Pezutah Tawueh*, "commands all medicines to yield up their full powers."[43] It is a time in which the life-giving energy of *Waka Taga* is most vivid.

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[39] Eliade, 80.

[40] John Laurie, *The Stony Indians of Alberta: Volume II*, unpublished manuscript, 1957-59, Glenbow Archives 4390, 94.

[41] Clark, 133.

[42] The literature seems to indicate that only Stoney men would perform the Sun dance.

[43] Chumak, 255.

When the time of the Sun dance arrived, a sacred lodge was erected that would come to symbolize the Stoneys' cosmos. In reverent silence, a tree with a forked trunk was felled by the tribe and carried to the ritual space, where it was inserted into a hole in the ground. Chief Walking Buffalo refers to this tree as the "tree of life,"[44] and it represented an *axis mundi* bridging the distance between the human and divine worlds and embodying visually the reality of the divine energy descending from heaven at the creation of the universe. Ritual offerings were placed at the base of the tree and coloured ribbons representing gifts to nature–"gifts to the sun, the wind, the clouds, the water"[45]–were affixed to its trunk over the course of the ceremony. A number of poles were then placed around the central tree and skins and brush used to create a largely enclosed, circular lodge structure. The primary entrance to the lodge faced to the east and the rising sun, symbol of regeneration and visual metaphor for the most sacred. The four cardinal directions were marked within the construction by four incense stones upon which sweet grass and incense were burned constantly. In addition to their spatial meaning, the four directions have an explicitly temporal significance, as the Stoney myth of god-man *Iktomni* and his journey through them makes clear. When asked who he is as he travels north, south, west, and east, *Iktomni* replies, "Yesterday," "Today," "Day-Before-Yesterday," "Day-Yet-To-Come."[46] Similarly, the Stoneys' myth of the Four Winds explicitly associates each Wind Power with both a direction and a season: "The Four Wind Powers [North Wind, South Wind, East Wind, West Wind] are bringers of the great seasons."[47] The four cardinal directions marked by the stones thus represent the days, moons, and seasons. Eliade observes of the Sun dance of the Sioux, ancestors of the Stoneys that

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[44] Clark, 133.

[45] Ibid., 133.

[46] Chumak, 150.

[47] Ibid., 32.

> their sacred lodge represents the universe; but at the same time it symbolizes the year. For the year is conceived as a journey through the four cardinal directions, signified by the four doors and windows of the lodge. The Dakotas say: "The Year is a circle around the world"–that is, around their sacred lodge, which is an *imago mundi*.[48]

The Sun dance lodge thus came to embody the whole of the Stoneys' cosmos–the world, the year, and the divine reality that underlay and animated both.

The Sun dance ritual unfolded over several days and featured the singing of songs, offering of sacrifices, smoking of the peace pipe, and rhythmic dancing around the lodge's central pole. The creation of the lodge, the ritual gestures of the ceremony, and the songs sung during the dance paralleled the actions of *Waka Taga* and the spirits in the primeval act of creation, and made that primordial mythical time present. This immersion in what has been called the "eternal present"–the illimitable temporality of the divine–represents a central impulse in premodern consciousness. Participants in the ritual would dance around the central pole and through the four cardinal points while staring at–or in the direction of–the sun. The sun symbolized for the tribe the beneficent power of *Waka Taga*: "The sun looks after everything–the herbs in the ground, people, animals–everything. It is ruler of health and strength, of all things that feed human beings."[49] To remain focused upon the sun while journeying around the lodge was to acknowledge *Waka Taga* as the source and animator of a temporal world that annually cycles through seasons and sacred times. This central ritual gesture both re-enacted the cycle of the year that had passed and anticipated that of the year to come. John Laurie notes that after the conclusion ceremony, "the lodge decays and only a few rotting posts mark the spot for rarely, if ever, is that particular site used again by the Stonies."[50] The previous year's world thus ends, falling back into the chaos from which it was originally created, while the new annual world begins its life after being called forth from non-being. The Stoneys thus encapsulated the whole of the ritual year in the Sun dance, the apotheosis of the people's religiosity and a powerful embodiment of their conceptions of sacred time and place.

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[48] Eliade, 74.

[49] Clark, 133.

The experience of renewal that flowed from participation in the Sun dance was palpable. To participate in the ritual was to gain access to the wellsprings of divine potency and wisdom, to be immersed in the generative energies of creation. It was to depart from ordinary or profane consciousness of time and enter into "*a primordial mythical time made present*"[51]–a time of superabundance and profound holiness. Occurring at the height of nature's annual lushness, the Sun dance both reflected and inspired the moment of rebirth of the cosmic order:

> ... a central goal of the annual Plains Sun Dance is the regeneration or renewal not only of the individual dancers but also of tribe and, ultimately, of the entire universe. The Sun Dance honors the source of all life so that the world and humankind may continue in the cycles of giving, receiving, bearing, being born, growing, becoming, returning to earth, and, finally, being born again.[52]

Father Pierre-Jean De Smet (1801-1873), a Jesuit missionary who documented the Assiniboines' cultural life, noted the social renewal that accompanied the Sun Dance:

> The camp, on this occasion, assumes a new life. All the garments and articles prepared during the winter, from the embroidered leggin and moccasin to the eagle-plumed headpiece, adorn their bodies for the first time, and the whole assembly appears quite brilliant; the camp acquires a new life.[53]

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[50] Laurie, *Volume II*, 101.

[51] Eliade, 68. Italicized in original text.

[52] Joseph Epes Brown with Emily Cousins, *Teaching Spirits: Understanding Native American Religious Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 13.

[53] De Smet, *Western Missions*, 138.

Thus, the Sun dance Ritual brings together both the mundane human journey through the days and seasons and the profound spiritual power of the primordial shaping of time and space itself. It is a ritual that renews the cosmos by returning creation to the original sanctity it possessed at the time of its origination.

The Stoneys' Sacred Cosmos: A Transhuman Epistemology

The Stoneys culture in western Canada prior to the influx of English-Canadian settlement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was essentially premodern. The Holy defined the basic structures of Stoney people's consciousness, shaping their understanding of time, place, and being. Whether in their vision of the cyclical nature of time and its celebration in the Sundance or in their sacred geographies of divine presence or their various forms of existential encounter with the transcendent, the Stoneys perceived their world as originating from and testifying to the vital power of *Waka Taga.* Their epistemology thus featured an essential transhuman dimension: the holiest and most significant forms of wisdom were those illuminations that came from manifestations of the divine–animal spirits, sacred places, ritual re-enactments of theophanies. Adopting what might be called a contemplative posture with respect to the natural world, Stoneys sought to discern the meaning and power of the thousand-and-one things and processes emanating from the Holy.

Chapter 2: English-Canadian Ideas of Nature

> That conquering relation to place has left its mark within us. When we go into the Rockies we may have the sense that gods are there. But if so, they cannot manifest themselves to us as ours. They are the gods of another race, and we cannot know them because of what we are, and what we did. There can be nothing immemorial for us except the environment as object. Even our cities have been encampments on the road to economic mastery.[54]

The Sources of English-Canadian Perceptions of Banff and Environs

The general character of the English-Canadian cultural perception of the Banff area and the Rocky Mountains differed dramatically from the Stoneys' idea of the area as a sacred cosmos. At the heart of English-Canadian perceptions of nature lay two fundamental differences from the Stoneys' vision: a strict separation of Creator and creation and a multiplicity of ideas about how to understand the natural world. For the Stoneys, nature was suffused with the living presence of the eternal; the landscape, the climate, the plants and animals were all incarnations of *Waka Taga.* The Great Mystery was the single, supreme moral source for the tribe and the various spiritual manifestations of *Waka Taga* in the natural world were approached with reverence, fascination, and dread. As Northrop Frye points out, much of the Western understanding of the natural world "grew out of the Biblical rejection of what it called 'idolatry', that is, the belief that there was something numinous or potentially divine in the natural world."[55] The rejection of the idolatrous conflation of Creator and creation led to two primary streams of nature consciousness in the West: a utilitarian approach that viewed nature unsentimentally as the dominion of humankind to be dominated and exploited and a more romantic view that perceived nature as reflective of divine wisdom, love, and will. Prior to the early modern period, these visions of nature existed under the aegis of a comprehensive religious sensibility that defined the cultural interpretation of the physical world. In the wake of the Enlightenment, the utilitarian and romantic forms of apprehending the world had developed into moral sources in their own right, complete with comprehensive epistemologies of time, space, and experience, and challenged the religious consciousness for supremacy as the interpreter of the natural world.

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[54] George Grant, *Technology and Empire: Perspectives on North America* (Toronto: House of Anansi, 1969) 17.

[55] Northrop Frye, *Divisions on a Ground: Essays on Canadian Culture*, ed. James Polk (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1982), 48-49.

In late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canada, apprehensions of Banff's nature were largely rooted in two closely related, yet in many ways contradictory, intellectual streams. The scientific and political communities of Canada gave voice to a view of nature as the dominion of humankind, to be catalogued, analyzed, and ultimately exploited to satisfy human need and desire. This ideology was challenged in the latter part of the century by Canadians–particularly artists and social critics–who perceived this rational, exploitative mentality as a kind of modern disease, thoroughly embodied in the metropolitan world and inimical to the true nature of human freedom and virtue. For these women and men, nature provided a refuge from the atomism and enervation of modern life. The presence of several distinct forms of nature consciousness among English-Canadians during this period reflects a foundational difference between premodern and modern cultures. Charles Taylor, an authoritative voice on the modern identity, puts it this way: "Our forebears were generally unruffled in their [religious] belief, because the sources they could envisage made unbelief incredible. The big thing that has happened since is the opening of other possible sources."[56] The nature of these alternate sources and their influence upon beliefs and practices associated with Banff will be explored in this chapter and those that follow. Whereas for the Stoneys and, for that matter, premodern Europeans, forms of rational and romantic apprehension of nature had previously existed under a religious aegis that defined their nature and limits, by the modern period, these forms of consciousness, by developing into moral sources in their own right, were challenging the religious modality of apprehension as the arbiter of ultimate questions. The streams of rationalist and romantic thought that fed English-Canadian perceptions of nature in and around Banff in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries represent, for Taylor, the heart of modern identity: "These two big and many-sided cultural transformations, the Enlightenment and Romanticism with its accompanying expressive conception of man, have made us what we are."[57] Though often conflicting, rationalist and romantic ideals of nature would dramatically reshape the predominant cultural vision of the Banff area, overthrowing the Stoneys' shared apprehension of creation as an inescapably religious reality with competing English-Canadian views of nature as, on the one hand, a mere instrument for human projects and, on the other, a place of communion with spiritual realities.

Enlightenment Conceptions of Nature

It is common among environmental historians and others to trace the roots of the domineering, utilitarian attitude toward nature to Holy Scripture, the *urtext* of Western civilization. The passage often identified as the most concise statement of this sensibility occurs in the first chapter of the Bible's first book, wherein God says to those made in his image and likeness, "[b]e fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth."[58] Granted at the dawn of creation, this dominion over creation had been embodied in God's imparting to Adam the power to name all the world's creatures. Within the Christian imagination, the first couple's primeval sin had disrupted humanity's natural dominion over the created world. Once spontaneously abundant, nature now required labour to bring forth its fruit; once pastoral and quiescent in its subservience to human need, creation was now the site of violent struggle between humans and animals. Until the end of the medieval period, the necessity continually to work the land was accepted with resignation throughout much of Europe as the unavoidable, lamentable wages of human sinfulness.

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[56] Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 312-13.

[57] Taylor, 393.

This fatalistic European consciousness of the natural world began to change with the emergence of new cultural sensibilities that today constitute the essence of modern thought and experience. The transformation of cultural conceptions about nature was complex and gradual, an organic development that synthesized a variety of social, intellectual, and economic changes, including the rise of democracy, the reformation of religious life, the emergence of scientific understanding, the so-called "birth of the individual," and the burgeoning of an industrial economy. The scientific revolution had a particularly profound influence upon western European ideas about nature. Intellectual luminaries Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Rene Descartes (1596-1650), and Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) gave voice to a radically different vision of the created world than that articulated by their predecessors. Bacon, in particular, is often seen as the prophet of modern forms of apprehending nature in his belief that the inductive scientific method he was articulating would produce a body of knowledge and technological inventions that would enable the human race to return to a prelapsarian state, to regain dominion–granted in Eden and lost in the Fall–over the "Empire of Nature." In the wake of the scientific revolution, ideas about an omnipresent God directing the course of the natural world were replaced by the vision of an architect-deity who had created the cosmos and set down the universal, mathematical laws by which the mechanisms of nature had continuously operated. Within this new vision,

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[58] Genesis 1:28 (King James Version).

> God became an element of the universal machinery, logically necessary for the ultimate explanation of nature, but dispensable in the interpretation of any particular event. ... in understanding the created world, His presence became indifferent; this world is ruled by the infallibly working laws of mechanics, and when we investigate it, we do not need to remember God at all.[59]

The medieval resignation to the unending struggle with creation was replaced with a growing optimism that through rigorous analysis of the mechanisms of nature, humanity could effect a final and complete reclamation of dominion over the natural world. By the eighteenth century, Europeans were growing ever more confident that the sad legacy of the Fall could be reversed and humanity, through the application of science and the development of technologies, could re-create Eden in this world. As Carolyn Merchant puts it, "[t]he Enlightenment idea of progress is rooted in the recovery of the garden lost in the Fall. ... The controlling image of the Enlightenment is the transformation from desert wilderness to cultivated garden."[60] The Enlightenment ideology of progress that came to dominate much of Western thought differed from the visions of earlier meliorists in its widespread acceptance and its association with the unchanging and scientifically verifiable laws of nature. Bruce McPherson points out that, in conceptualizing progress, the British Victorians "took what had been an historical idea (the history of man as a repeated search for the perfect civil society and the good life) and transformed it into a 'natural law' (progress as a law of human nature)."[61] For Merchant, as for many other environmental historians, this narrative of redemption is the dominant cultural myth informing the West's understanding of nature.

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[59] Leszek Kolakowski, *Modernity on Endless Trial* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 96.

[60] Carolyn Merchant, "Reinventing Eden: Western Culture as a Recovery Narrative," in *Uncommon Ground: Toward Reinventing Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: W.W. Norton, 1995), 137.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, a sea change in European conceptions of nature from their medieval forms was well-developed: nature was being re-configured as soulless matter-in-motion, theology was being challenged by science as the supreme interpreter of natural phenomenon, and cultural resignation to a ceaseless contest with creation was being overthrown by a buoyant faith in the human capacity to know and control nature. With God removed to a shadowy existence in the universal machinery and human mastery of nature advancing through scientific study, the relationship between the divine, the human, and the natural shifted dramatically: "Modernism thus underlies the emergence of a profound homocentrism, still dominant in the world, which may be characterized as *the ideology of man infinite* or the rise of *Lord Man*, that is, a radical change in humankind's sense of relative proportions."[62] The ideology of man infinite envisioned nature as merely an exploitable resource for human purposes; shorn of its divine reality and increasingly subjugated by Lord Man, the natural world lost much of its existential meaning for European culture. This ideology was not limited to the realm of science. The same hope that human scientific endeavour could liberate humanity from thraldom to nature was echoed in the Enlightenment belief that reason could liberate individuals from political tyranny and the superstitious chicanery of ecclesiastical authorities. It was also reflected in the promise that the unfettered dynamic of free enterprise offered humanity the prospect of overthrowing the remnants of feudalism and the continuing blight of mercantilism. The clarion call of Modernism was to break with the archaic, oppressive norms of the past–whether conceived in social, environmental, economic or religious terms–and boldly forge a progressive future. Profound, the implications of this new vision of the world dramatically reshaped conceptions of humanity, divinity, nature, and society; as Charles Taylor puts it,

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[61] Bruce McPherson, *Between Two Worlds: Victorian Ambivalence about Progress* (Washington: University of America, 1983), vii.

[62] Max Oelschlaeger, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (New Haven: Yale University Pres, 1991), 69. It is not entirely clear whether Oelschlaeger's use of the term "homocentrism" is intended to convey a meaning distinct from that associated with "anthropocentrism". In my discussion of his work, I have used the term anthropocentric exclusively.

> [m]odern freedom came about through the discrediting of such [premodern] orders. But at the same time as they restricted us, these orders gave meaning to the world and to the activities of social life. The things that surround us were not just potential raw materials or instruments for our projects, but they had the significance given them by their place in the chain of being. ... The discrediting of these orders has been called the "disenchantment" of the world. With it, things lost some of their magic. ... Once society no longer had a sacred structure, once social arrangements and modes of action are no longer grounded in the order of things or the will of God, they are in a sense up for grabs. They can be redesigned with their consequences for the happiness and well being of individuals as our goal. The yardstick that henceforth applies is instrumental reason.[63]

The modern understanding of nature as "potential raw materials or instruments for our projects" would be a definitive concept in the early history of English-Canadian visions of the Banff region.

Romantic Conceptions of Nature

The romantic vision of nature that emerged in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe was not simply a reactionary movement originating *ex nihilo* in response to industrialization and the rise of modern forms of apprehending nature. Indeed, the very intellectual and religious traditions that nourished the utilitarian perspective on nature also cultivated moral conceptions and aesthetic ideals that contradicted a strictly domineering approach to creation. Though much environmental history has tended to view the Judaeo-Christian contribution to Western perceptions of nature solely through the prism of the exploitative mentality articulated forcefully in Genesis and reaching its intellectual apogee in the scientific utopianism of Bacon and his followers, the West's religious patrimony offered a compelling alternative vision. As Mark Stoll points out, the focus upon the religious lineage of Western civilization's conquering frame of mind and its disastrous–some would say apocalyptic–consequences for nature

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[63] Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity* (Concord, ON: Anansi, 1991), 3, 5.

> ... downplays or ignores Christianity's other face. As a creation religion, Christianity has proclaimed that God created a world that clearly manifests his goodness and wisdom, and sustained it with his daily providence. ... Christians have professed that man, lord of creation, must prepare for the day when his own Lord would return and require an accounting from his manager (man) of his property (the world). The Biblical injunction to conquer nature was balanced by the need to regard God's creation with wonder, love, reverence, and care.[64]

The early religious and intellectual history of the West bears witness to this alternative view. Drawing upon the many poetic evocations of the glories of creation contained within both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament, St. John Chrysostom (ca. 347-407), one of the Fathers of the Christian Church, promulgated the idea that the Book of Nature was a complement to the Book of Revelation. Indeed, for Chrysostom, Nature was in some ways superior to Scripture inasmuch as the latter required literacy and theological familiarity, whereas the former was essentially egalitarian–a simple, sublime, and universally comprehensible manifestation of God's power, wisdom, and love.[65] The Christian Neo-Platonists held a similar view in their belief that that contemplation of creation could lead the mind by degrees to the ethereal heights of divine wisdom and presence.[66] Throughout the ancient and medieval Christian world, folk religious traditions incorporate pantheistic elements into their spiritual lives. When, in the early thirteenth century, St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) proclaimed the glories of nature and cultivated a profound existential relationship with creation, he was merely reaffirming a central intellectual current in the Western Christian tradition that had been neglected by clerical elites for centuries during the Church's long struggle to expunge nature-worship from Europe.

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[64] Mark Stoll, *Protestantism, Capitalism, and Nature in America* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997), 3.

[65] Ibid., 17-18.

In the centuries after the medieval period, several scientific, philosophical, and literary critiques challenged the ascendant rationalistic modality of perceiving the natural world. Scientific challenges to the disenchanted, mechanistic model of the universe drew from the long tradition of western thought ideas about the distinctions between final and efficient causes and about the complexity and interrelatedness of creation. Whereas the evolving scientific worldview had relied increasingly upon efficient causes to explain the relationships among natural phenomena, the natural theologians (or physico-theologists) sought more substantial metaphysical grounding; consequently;, they argued from the nature of causality itself and the order and diversity of creation that the existence of a Prime Mover, an Intelligent Designer, was a far more credible scientific conclusion than was a random, uncomprehending system of unrelated moving parts. These philosophical and scientific critiques of mechanical materialism offered sophisticated articulations of a cosmos saturated in meaning and evincing abundantly a divine intelligence and will. Recalling Chrysostom's notion of the Book of Nature, the natural theological tradition shared with the more secularly inclined scientific ideology a belief in anthropomorphism and a body of universal laws by which creation was regulated; it departed from this intellectual current in its strong emphasis upon actively seeking out the artistry of God in the created world. Indeed, it could well be argued that for many natural theologians, as for their Neo-Platonic forebears, nature's primary significance was not as a repository of resources, but rather as a medium of contemplation for those who would ascend from the knowledge of the sacred in worldly things to the transcendent awareness of God.[67]

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[66] Ibid, 15-17.

The re-enchantment of the nature represented in a scientific and philosophical manner by the natural theological tradition was both complemented and challenged in the aesthetic sphere by the rise of natural romanticism in literature, poetry, and the visual arts. Like the natural theologians, the romantic artists disdained the soulless matter-in-motion universe that they associated with the crass materialism of science and the uninspired logic of commerce. For the romantics, as for their brethren in the natural theological tradition, nature had an inherent and profound metaphysical meaning. True sovereignty in the world lay not with Lord Man, as the disciples of Bacon might have it, but rather with the divine, conceived variously as the Christian Logos, a transcendent architect, or a spontaneous and vital presence. But while the natural theologians perceived in the created world an intricate and exquisitely rational order, reflective of divine reason, the romantics saw in nature a wildness, an unreason, that inspired, not intellectual illumination, but rather the spontaneous swelling of emotion. This miraculous capacity of nature to inspire awe and reverence was understood as a means by which to become reacquainted with the primeval, the pre-cultural, the essential nature of the human person. If the Baconian scientific ideology had promised the inexorable march into a progressive future as the *telos* of human society, the romantic vision turned that conception on its head by looking instead to the past for the true wellsprings of individual capacity and purpose. Nature, in this body of thought, was the necessary counterbalance to society. It offered vitality, rather than enervation; spontaneity, rather than uniformity; wholeness, rather than specialization and fragmentation.

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[67] Oelschlaeger, 97-132.

Chapter 3: Pre-Confederation Visions of Banff

The Transhuman World of Pre-Confederation Banff

During the pre-Confederation period, the Canadian West was almost wholly uncomprehended by the rationalizing Enlightenment vision and its accompanying anthropocentric ideology of progress. Only the first chapter of the Enlightenment recovery narrative had been written in Rupert's Land–the chapter that described a disordered world of Nature's dominion over man, of man's incomprehension of Nature. The exigencies of colonial life in British North America allowed little time, money, or inclination to invest in scientific research in central Canada, much less in the sparsely populated wilderness west of Red River. Moreover, the science predominant in Canada during the early nineteenth century was ill-suited to establishing faith in the rational, systematic investigation of western nature as a means to replacing wilderness with garden, ignorance with practical knowledge, subservience with dominion. Reflecting the powerful influence of religious culture generally and the evangelical awakening specifically, amateur and academic science in Canada at the time were dominated by the deeply theological considerations of natural theology, a system which placed at the heart of their inquiries metaphysics and practical piety, rather than disenchanted materialism or the quest for technical mastery. More practical scientific efforts in British North America during the period were undertaken by British officers returned from the Napoleonic Wars. These men were, to use Suzanne Zeller's clever term, "Gullivers"–adventurers who travelled to the far reaches of British North America to explore and map its natural features.[68] Encountering a nature mediated through scientific instruments, rendering creation into mathematical figures and, later, geometric models of space, these early geographical scientists engaged in work that resulted in an abundance of information about far distant places with little ready applicability to the immediate needs of British North Americans. Their work extended dominion over nature in the abstract, establishing intellectual colonization over some of the vast spaces of Rupert's Land and beyond, but bore little tangible fruit. The culture of science during this period was thus shaped by the intellectual and leisurely avocations of the cultural elite, on the one hand, and the adventurous–though largely impractical and economically peripheral–feats of scientific Gullivers, on the other.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given the dearth of scientific information about the region, the Banff area was for most British North Americans during the pre-Confederation period merely one of the innumerable and largely indistinguishable spaces comprising the vast wilderness west of Canada West/Upper Canada. The North-West generally was regarded as a landmass made homogeneous by its utter barrenness, a place of frozen tundra in the north and desolate desert in the south, a region unfit for agricultural development or civilized habitation. Doug Owram points out that in the period between 1816 and 1849, "the West was viewed through the eyes of the fur trader, arctic explorer, and missionary, but not those of the developer or settler. And in all the observations that were made, one ultimate presupposition stands out: whatever else it might be, to the observer it was a fur trading empire and enduring wilderness."[69] This view of Rupert's Land and beyond was often coloured by English-Canadian religious sensibilities: the wildness of the territory was seen as paralleling its spiritual confusion. The territory was commonly envisioned as an empty, untamed, and dangerous place habitable only by those possessing the pagan ignorance of Natives or submitting to the brutish existence of trappers and traders.

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[68] Suzanne Zeller, "Nature's Gullivers and Crusoes: The Scientific Exploration of British North America, 1800-1870," in *North American Exploration: A Continent Comprehended*, ed. John Logan Allen (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 190.

Prior to the 1850s, there were precious few forays into the Banff region by the standard bearers of European civilization. The North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company had both established intermittent occupancy at Rocky Mountain House by the turn of the nineteenth century, and Piegan Post on the Bow River was briefly inhabited in the 1830s. The rare settler, missionary, trapper, trader, explorer, or artist visited the area, but, thanks in part to the Hudson's Bay Company's unofficial policy of discouraging publication of accounts about its domain, it remained overwhelmingly unknown by English-Canadians. The perceived threat of hostile Natives was a primary impediment to exploration and trade. Sir George Simpson (1787-1860) make reference in his brief history of the fur trade presence in the Bow River region to the lives sacrificed to "warlike tribes" in the effort to establish trade in the region.[70] For most English-Canadians who were aware of the Banff area, it was not a destination, a *place*, as it was for the Stoneys, but existed, as far as the Bow River valley was concerned, rather as a thoroughfare, and, as far as the mountains were concerned, as an obstacle on the journey between the Plains and the West Coast. Uninhabited by civilized people, uncomprehended by human reason, untamed by technology, it was perceived as a region in which individuals and communities were subject to the hostilites of nature and its pagan inhabitants. The Baconian dream of asserting dominion, of naming, subduing, and transforming creation for civilized life, agriculture, and industry, had not yet been incarnated.

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[69] Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 11.

[70] Sir George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round be World, During the Years 1841 and 1842*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), 80. Perhaps to validate his claim about the dangerous and "unsophisticated savages" who populated the Bow River region, Simpson also makes reference to a large scale–and therefore more secure–expedition of over one hundred men that penetrated the region in 1822 in order to test "the truth of the rumours as to the riches of Bow River."

Sources of Early Nineteenth-Century Visions of Banff

Many scholars have noted that deep within the consciousness of early nineteenth-century British North Americans lay a profound and abiding unease with the untamed natural world, whether that wilderness existed only in imaginings of the distant western wastelands or in the far more immediate realities of the farming frontiers of Upper Canada. According to this stream of historical and literary interpretation, settlers in Canada faced a nature that seemed indifferent, even hostile, to all human ambitions:

> The densely dark forests were to them a harsh, unyielding wilderness only partially tamed by back-breaking toil. Wanting to build a home and create verdant fields, they, their wives, and children saw only the rocks, the stumps, and the barrens. Fighting extremes of weather, hordes of insects, and choking weeds, they sought stability in the midst of an unpredictable and ruthless landscape.[71]

Northrop Frye claimed that this vision of nature was rooted in the smallness and isolation of early Canadian communities, the social reality of which evoked a profound anxiety and the face of "a huge, unthinking, menacing and formidable physical setting."[72] In reviewing the differences between Canadian and American literary perspectives upon nature, American scholar Marcia B. Kline went so far as to suggest that, "[a]cross the border [in Canada], the tradition is monolithic: nowhere is there a joyful affirmation of wild nature. ... "[73] Nature in this understanding was as much mythic presence as physical obstacle, and the near ubiquitous consciousness of this elemental, terrifying force in British North America stimulated the development of a "garrison mentality." This sensibility of place divided the landscape into the civilized world and the undomesticated wilderness outside. Forays into the untamed natural world were seen as perilous sorties, and often ended with a strategic retreat from wilderness to the more familiar, more secure, confines of human society. This form of perceiving nature was by no means particular to Canada. Associated in the Christian imagination with corrupted creation, the Satanic temptations of Christ in the desert, and the Israelites near-fatal seduction by idolatry, the wilderness has traditionally been understood as a place of physical desolation, demonic presence, and moral confusion. As William Cronon points out, as late as the eighteenth century, the common usage of the term "wilderness" connoted a place that was "'deserted,' 'savage,' 'desolate,' 'barren' .... the emotion one was most likely to feel in its presence was 'bewilderment'–or terror."[74] Though the dark reality implied by these associations no longer monopolized the term "wilderness" after the eighteenth century, it remained a central thread in Western ways of perceiving nature's wild places, particularly in regions–like the North-West–far removed from civilization.

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[71] A.A. Den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 27-28.

[72] Northrop Frye, *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1971), 225.

Although early nineteenth-century English-Canadians have often been characterized–some would say caricatured–as frontier pioneers who confronted an unknowable, hostile nature with a mixture of fear and loathing, there was undeniably within the culture of central and eastern English-Canada strong cultural impulses to view the created world as either wild, inherently beautiful, and spiritually restorative or ornately designed, elegantly rational, and intellectually satisfying. These counter-currents to the "garrison mentality" were fed by streams of romantic understanding that flowed across the Atlantic from Britain and nourished Canadians' appreciation for nature. The vision of nature as an exquisitely rational design was embodied in early nineteenth-century Canada in the tradition of natural theology that dominated the halls of higher learning and influenced the leisure activities of Victorian gentlemen and women. More sentimentally romantic views of nature were also present in early nineteenth-century English-Canadian culture. As Patricia Jasen notes, a writer like Susanna Moodie (1803-1885) was not a "'one-woman garrison,' totally at war with nature"; the colonizing mentality of the settler certainly informed much of her sensibility about nature, but it did not prevent her from being able to enter into the "mentality of the tourist, free to possess the landscape imaginatively" and to wax lyrical about the primeval beauty of Stony Lake.[75] Nature, within this vision, was not a menacing, uncomprehending force, but rather a field of manifest beauty and spontaneity, capable of edifying the sensitive soul.

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[73] Marcia B. Kline, *Beyond the Land Itself: Views of Nature in Canada and the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 53.

[74] William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground*, 70.

Visitors to the Banff region in the pre-Confederation period expressed visions of the natural world that reflected both the defensive, adversarial vision discerned by Frye and the more romantic and sentimental perspective articulated by Moodie and others. Frequently, these men articulated their experiences in the mountains through the aesthetic category of the sublime. As defined by Edmund Burke (1729-1797) in his seminal work, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), the sublime in nature was alien, raw, and indefinable, possessed of an overwhelming and indescribable otherness. The rhetoric of the sublime was particularly well-suited for communicating the dread and despair in the face of a sinister nature that Frye saw expressed in so much early Canadian literature, but it could also be used to articulate visions of nature rooted in a reverent awe or a mystical delight. Confronting the West prior to the advent of the railway, mass agricultural settlement, and industrial development, pre-Confederation visitors to Banff often framed their experiences in the area as encounters with a radically different reality, one that was frequently homologized to a transhuman presence. Not surprisingly, their encounters were often refracted through both Christian theology and the idea of the sublime.

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[75] Patricia Jasen, *Wild Things: Nature, Culture, and Tourism in Ontario 1790-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 25.

The writings of David Thompson (1770-1857), the Reverend Robert Rundle, and the Earl of Southesk (1827-1905)–three of the earliest English-Canadians to visit and write about the Banff area–all give expression to a perspective upon nature that apprehended vividly something of the *mysterium tremendum* in creation. Whether as reverent awe at the power and majesty of the divine Creator or as oppressive dread in the face of a daemonic, unknowable, and ultimately hostile presence, the irrational or pre-rational apprehension of the a transhuman presence was a powerful reality in these men's experiences of Banff and the mountains. In this sense, their encounters possessed similarities with those of the Stoneys and serve as a transitional form of experience between the premodern and the modern. But whereas in the Stoneys' culture, nature was understood as divine and mountains were inescapably and primarily Holy places, among English-Canadians, the apprehension of the transhuman in the mountains could occur alongside–and even be challenged by–views of nature as either disenchanted, rationally comprehensible space or aesthetically engaging place. The sense of the transcendent in Banff's mountains remained for visitors like Rundle, Thompson, and Southesk, but the kind of stark existential force that nature must have possessed for both premodern Europeans as well as Native North Americans was vitiated by these men's capacity to distance themselves, either rationally or aesthetically, from the objects of their contemplation.

David Thompson: Rationality and Reverence

David Thompson, one of the earliest English-Canadian visitors to the Banff region, embodied a remarkable marriage of scientific rationalism and religious reverence. His experience of the Banff area united the "Gulliverian" geographical scientist's interest in rendering the mountains into mathematical and, later, geometrical figures with a devout Christian's capacity to perceive in the same mountains an awesome Providential power. His journals of his mountain journeys in the early nineteenth century include voluminous astronomical readings and meticulous observations of the Banff area. On November 28, 1800, for instance, as Thompson travelled along the Bow River towards the Rockies, he wrote, "[w]e then came towards the Mountain N60W 4M, when I stopped to observe Merid Alt^{de} of [sun's] LL [lower limb] Lat^{de} [Latitude] 51°:3':32" N. The nearest part of the Mountain bears now from me S38W 25M."[76] In characteristic shorthand, Thompson here records instrument readings taken in the Banff area. These numerical renderings of the mountains represent the earliest substantial efforts to comprehend rationally the region's natural features, and they were later incorporated into Thompson's great map of present-day western Canada (1814).

But, buried among Thompson's fairly prosaic entries and instrument readings is a far more "enchanted" understanding of the natural world, an understanding shaped by Protestant piety, sublime aesthetics, and catastrophist geology. In Thompson's journal entry of November 30, 1800, in which he provides an account of scaling Loder Peak, near Exshaw–the first account of a European ascent in the Banff area–the great explorer and cartographer elegantly reflects upon the God who ordered the elemental chaos into continental backbone: "Never before did I behold so just, so perfect a Resemblance to the Waves of the Ocean in the wintry Storm. When looking upon them [mountains] and attentively considering their wild Order and Appearance, the Imagination is apt to say, these must once have been Liquid, and that State when swelled to its greatest Agitation, suddenly congealed and made Solid by Power Omnipotent."[77] This notion of the mountains as sublime phenomena, comparable to the vast and mighty sea, was expressed elsewhere in Thompson's writings, and reflected his awareness of the "ruin and desolation," the "chaos" and "wild forms" to be found in both. While he acknowledged the centuries-old European tradition of linking the chaotic forms of the mountains to God's wrath at man's primordial sinfulness,[78] Thompson took a "more comprehensive view" of the mountains and saw them rather as "the well ordered work of a divine Being, all powerful, wise and most benevolent to mankind."[79] Thompson's views of the mountains represent an intriguing marriage of sublime awe and rational appreciation, and bring together the romantic's revelry in the spontaneity and wildness of nature with the natural theologian's faith in the beneficent purposes of creation.

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[76] David Thompson, *Columbia Journals*, ed. Barbara Belyea (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 19.

His views also echo those of adherents of the catastrophist theory of geology, which posited that singular, titanic acts had formed the mountains and other natural features.

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[77] Ibid, 19.

[78] Majorie Hope Nicolson, *Mountain Gloom and Mountain Glory: The Development of the Aesthetics of the Infinite* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959).

[79] Ibid,, 200-01 (quotations taken from Archives of Ontario, David Thompson Journals, no. 71 [F443]).

Whether he was aware of the theory or not, he echoed its basic assumption: "For his part, Thompson still imagined that the earth in its present state was the result of rapid creation rather than slow evolutionary forces."[80] Thompson's vision of the mountains thus manifests several significant intellectual currents–scientific geography, catastrophist geology, sublime aesthetics, natural theology, and Protestant piety. Considering the mountains was thus for Thompson both an exercise in geographical science, in seeking rationally to comprehend and render physical forms into cartographic figures, and a means of imaginatively entering into the primeval moment of their creation and experiencing an irrational awe at the "Power Omnipotent" that had commanded their agitated elements to take shape and form.

Robert Rundle: Fallen Nature, Sublime Nature

Robert Rundle, the Wesleyan missionary to the Stoneys in the 1840s, echoed Thompson's sense of the mountains as places vividly manifesting the divine in a rather more literary and romantic way. One of the few English-Canadian visitors to the Banff region in the decades after Thompson, Rundle was educated in Cornwall and clearly familiar with the traditions of "natural religion" or natural theology, romanticism, and the aesthetics of the sublime, all of which shaped his vision of western Canada. He married these currents with Protesant conceptions of wilderness and the Christian belief in the Noachin flood in a series of notes he composed in 1843 for his Uncle Benjamin describing the vast spiritual landscape of present-day western Canada:

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[80] Ibid., 185. Further evidence of Thompson's catastrophist beliefs are found in another passage describing the mountains near Spokane House: "The Pillar like Rock has always its Chasms perpend & split in pieces as by accident, in every horizontal direction–it appears to be one compact bed, having no Lines in it that are not perpend, & the depth of its bed is as far as 30 ft. One must say that the finger of the Deity has opened by immediate operation the passage of this River thro' such solid Materials, as must for ever have resisted its action" (Belyea, ed., 165).

> But stay look beneath you–here is N.H. [Norway House], an oasis in a wilderness of sp's [sic] desolation. The testing place of Abraham amid the moral waste of Canaan. ... Now the barren plains appear beneath us unrelieved by a single shrub. Look around you. Here are Blackfoot and their kindred tribes. Gaze and drop tears of blood over the scene. In nearly every tent thou beholdest is raised an altar to Satan. A darkness exists without being scarcely enlivened by a single ray of genial light. ... We bend our course again towards the west and to the Rocky Mountains area before us like stern monuments of a world that once was. The same perhaps in appearance as when... ..appeared above the retiring waters of the deluge and spreading (?) that mighty ocean in wh [sic] a world lay entombed. How majestically their towering peaks shout into the midnight heavens... .Look however into their recesses. There you behold the sons of the forest... ... .amid their vast solitudes.[81]

Linking together the ideas of "wilderness," "barren plains... unrelieved by a single shrub," and the Rocky Mountains with the "moral waste of Canaan," the Satanic ministrations of the heathen Blackfoot, and the purification of creation through the flood, Rundle's words give voice to a baleful symmetry between the North-West's physical desolation and its inhabitants' moral darkness. Rundle's vision expresses a common evangelical Protestant conception of the western wilderness. Doug Owram points out that, "[t]he close connection between the physical and spiritual connotations of wilderness also reflected the conservative and evangelical belief that the natural man would inevitably fall into evil."[82] Rundle's view of the mountains also reveals his perceptual sympathies with Thompson; the mountains are apprehended as emblems of God's creative omnipotence. Unlike Thompson, however, who links the mountains' forms to the benevolence of the Deity, Rundle views them more dismally, as "stern monuments" of the catastrophic changes to the earth wrought by the Noachin flood. Although Rundle here linked the Rockies with human sinfulness, however, he was also capable of reverent and even mystical forms of apprehending nature. Of the mountains in the Banff area he wrote,

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[81] Robert Terrill Rundle, *The Rundle Journals 1840-1848*, ed. Hugh Dempsey, introduction and notes by Gerald M. Hutchinson (Calgary: Historical Society of Alberta and Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1977), 142-43.

[82] Owram, 24.

> On Thurs. 15th they presented the sublimest spectacle I ever expect to behold until I become an inhabitant of the "New Heaven & the New Earth." I saw them then after a recent fall of snow & they looked as beautiful as if newly risen at the call of Omnipotence & fresh from their makers [*sic*] smile. Their pointed & snowy summits rose high into the heavens like the lofty spires of some vast & magnificent marble temple reared by the Almighty Architect of nature to mock all the works of art. The sight seemed too grand & too glorious for reality.[83]

Educated in Cornwall and clearly familiar with both the traditions of "natural religion"–natural theology–and romanticism, Rundle in this passage marries–somewhat irregularly–rationalist and romantic notions of mountains as *both* instantaneous, sublimely overwhelming expressions of divine omnipotence *and* meticulously designed and rationally comprehensible temples of godly reason. Both Rundle and Thompson were united in their apprehension of the natural world around Banff as a place in which the nature of the transcendent was robustly expressed. The two men shared an experience of the mountains as places that spoke of the sovereignty, power, and wisdom of the Christian God.

The Earl of Southesk and the Daemonic Sublime

James Carnegie, the Earl of Southesk, a patrician adventurer who travelled through Hudson's Bay Company territory in 1859 and 1860, experienced in the Rockies none of the exultation associated with Rundle's and Thompson's intimations of the eternal. His writings are filled with the kind of irrational dread of hostile wilderness that figures so prominently in the thought of "garrison mentality" literary scholars like Northrop Frye and Margaret Atwood. Like Rundle and Thompson, Southesk employs the aesthetic sublime to describe an alien, otherworldly reality; unlike his English-Canadian predecessors in the region, however, he experienced neither reverent awe, nor mystical delight in the mountains, but rather a kind of appalling despair. Upon being confronted by the "solemn, leaden shade" of the mountains, Southesk wrote of being "quite overwhelmed," overtaken by "one of those strange tides of emotion that transcend both control and analysis" and barely able to remain atop his horse.[84] After he remarked of his great joy at leaving the mountains, he commented on his experience of "something appalling in the gloom of the deep mountain valleys," a desolation that "words cannot describe. ... The very mass and vastness of the mountains depress and daunt the soul. .... In leaving the mountains, we seemed ... to resemble the band of travelers in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, making their glad escape from Doubting Castle, the stronghold of that evil tyrant Giant Despair."[85]

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[83] Rundle, 61.

Southesk's writings strongly manifest the influence of the idea of the sublime, channelled into a kind of daemonic dread that the eminent religious scholar Rudolf Otto believed "emerg[es] from the mind of primeval man [and] forms the starting-point for the entire religious development in history ... Even when [a more highly developed form of the numinous emotion] has long attained its higher and purer mode of expression it is possible for the primitive types of excitation that were formerly a part of it to break out in the soul in all their original naivete and so to be experienced afresh."[86] Thompson clearly appreciated this way of perceiving mountains, but his awareness of their desolate and chaotic nature was more than balanced by a powerful belief in the beneficence and order of God's creation. No such mitigation is evident in Southesk. Indeed, the Shakespearean line that he chose for his book's epigraph–"Here feel we but the penalty of Adam"–may allude to the belief, popularized by Martin Luther, that the world's rocky eruptions were emblems of God's violent wrath against Original Sin and monuments to the fallenness of creation.[87] Although his experience differed considerably, Southesk was united with Thompson and Rundle in apprehending the mountains of Banff as a dwelling place of a transhuman reality.

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[84] James Carnegie, Earl of Southesk, *Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains: A Diary and Narrative of Travel, Sport, and Adventure During a Journey through the Hudson's Bay Company Territory in 1859 and 1869* (1874; Toronto: J. Campbell, 1875), 178.

[85] Ibid., 254.

[86] Otto, 14, 16.

The Aesthetic Sublime of Sir George Simpson

Not all English-Canadian visitors to the Banff area in the pre-Confederation period appear to have experienced strongly a transhuman presence. Sir George Simpson, who visited the area during his voyage around the world in the early 1840s, gives little indication of any encounter with the divine in the area. Simpson's account of the area around Devil's Gap is perhaps a notable exception: "As far as the eye could reach, mountain rose above mountain, while at our feet lay a valley surrounded by an amphitheatre of cold, bare, rugged peaks. In these crags, which were almost perpendicular, neither could tree plant its roots nor goat find a resting-place; the "Demon of the Mountains" alone could fix his dwelling there."[88] The "Demon of the Mountains" is a somewhat peculiar allusion of uncertain provenance. Whatever its source, it was clearly intended to convey something of the fear associated with such a seemingly barren, inhospitable place. Here the mountain wilderness is presented–though somewhat mutedly–as sublime, an inhuman site arousing bewilderment and fear. As later entries in his account make clear, he–or at least the author of his book–was clearly aware of the aesthetic categories of the sublime and the picturesque. Simpson employed the rhetoric of sublimity and expected his audience to share his understanding. Consider this passage as Simpson travels westward from the opposite side of the height of land: "The scenery, from having been sublime, was now merely picturesque."[89] Whether or not Simpson truly experienced something sublime in the mountains, he and his ghost-writer clearly understood that readers of his account would *expect* him to encounter something eerie, disconcerting, near daemonic in the vast solitudes of the Rocky Mountains. Whereas Thompson, Rundle, and Southesk all wrote of overwhelming experiences of a transhuman reality in the Banff region, Simpson's account of the area is more detached and suggests a form of self-conscious aesthetic contemplation. This more sedate manner of landscape appreciation, as much as the purely recreational nature of his visit to the area, supports the view of Simpson as the first tourist to the Banff region.

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[87] Hope Nicholson.

[88] Simpson, 114.

The Transhuman Realities of Pre-Confederation Banff

Although there are obvious differences in the experiences of the Banff area among Thompson, Rundle, and Southesk, their accounts share a strong awareness of a transhuman reality. The influence of the aesthetics of the sublime and the continuing power of religious reawakening in early nineteenth-century Britain and North America, associated most particularly with the evangelical movement inspired by John Wesley (1703-1791) and others, undoubtedly contributed to the prevalence of this kind of apprehension. But perhaps equally important was the lack of human command over the wilderness of the North-West during this period. In the years before railways and townsites and national parks, when the wilderness in and around Banff remained uncomprehended by human intelligence and largely untouched by human technologies, the region was perceived as a place in which humanity was revealed in its insignificance and the transhuman was vividly present. If the ideology of man infinite promised a dramatic shift in the relative proportions between humanity and nature, the human and the divine, then the obstinacy of unruly wilderness, the manifest sovereignty of a majestic Creator God, and the daemonic presences of the Banff region in the North-West during the pre-Confederation period suggested that it had not yet taken hold there. The area remained the unredeemed wilderness of the Enlightenment recovery narrative–a vast emptiness inhabited only by beings considered either subhuman (Native North Americans) or superhuman (the Christian God and Southesk's demons). But the seeds of change were clearly evident: Thompson's geographical science and Simpson's largely prosaic account of the picturesque and sublime areas of Banff and environs portend later forms of experience in the region more deeply rooted in a primarily anthropocentric apprehension of nature as either a mechanistic system to be rationally comprehended or an aesthetic object to be enjoyed.

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[89] Ibid., 127.

Chapter 4: Utilitarianism and the Birth of Banff

Rationalist Perceptions of Nature and the Idea of Progress in Nineteenth- Century Canada

For much of the nineteenth century, English-Canadians encountered the natural world through the lens of natural theology.[90] Anchored in their belief that one could trace the "footprints" of God in his material world, natural theologians asserted that meticulous study of "the book of nature" would reveal to the patient mind the order and interconnectedness of the natural world–tangible authentication of God's wisdom and creative power. Its influence was extensive: natural science courses were introduced in school curricula, societies to study the natural world were initiated, and the works of William Paley, the giant of Victorian natural theology, became standard teachings in university courses and in popular publications. Natural science and excursions into nature became essential for any cultured gentleman (gentlewomen didn't join the practice until later). Amateurs were particularly significant in the natural theology movement, inspired by the ease with which even the untrained observer of nature could inventory and analyze the evidence of divine Creation.[91] The Victorian schema of natural theology was not, however, simply a conceptual matrix for studying the arrangement and interrelations of the natural world. It also had profound social implications for the understanding of man's unique place in the world. Although natural theology stressed the unity of all things in Creation, there was no doubt that the crown jewel of creation was man. Understanding of man's privileged status varied. Some emphasized the scriptural assertion of man's creation in the image and likeness of God or the divine command to Adam to subdue the earth as powerful statements of the kingly place of human beings in creation. Others, like John William Dawson, argued that the geological ages of time, corresponding to the "days" of creation, were periods of species' origination, with the emergence of human beings representing the consummation of the process. Such anthropocentric views suggest, as Carl Berger has argued, that natural theology was "not so much about nature as about man's special place above and beyond nature."[92] Human supremacy over nature implied human dominion over nature. This figuring of the relationship between humanity and the natural world reflects the influence of Baconian ideals and represents a fundamental challenge to the Native-Canadian vision of a reverent and dialogical relationship with nature.

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[90] For an extensive discussions of natural theology, see Carl Berger, *Science, God, and Nature in Victorian Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) and A.B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001).

[91] Although natural theology had begun to be eclipsed by Hegelian idealism in the academic world of late nineteenth century Canada, the publication of, for instance, Catherine Parr Traill's *Studies of Plant Life in Canada* in 1885 testifies to the continuing hold of the natural theological vision on the public imagination. It should also be noted that idealism posited a no less anthropocentric vision of history and nature than its predecessor.

By the mid-nineteenth century, science had begun to emerge as a professional discipline in Canada and was developing into a specialized and authoritative voice on the nature of the nation and its destiny. As professionalization of the discipline occurred, the strong piety associated with natural theological investigations of nature and the abstract qualities of "Gulliverian" geography were increasingly marginalized by pragmatic, often economic, considerations of the scientific enterprise. Zeller refers to the scientists of the latter half of the nineteenth century as "Crusoes"–eminently practical men who sought to extend intellectual mastery over British North American nature through inventory science.[93] No one embodied the image of a Crusoe more fully than Sir William Logan (1798-1875), founder of the Geological Survey of Canada, whose practical investigations of Canadian mineral resources became a model for inventorying the natural world. Like his geographic scientific predecessors, Logan's surveys extended rational mastery over nature, but they were also married to a form of progressive utilitarianism that linked abstract scientific enterprise to concrete economic practice:

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[92] Berger, 45.

[93] Zeller, "Nature's Gullivers and Crusoes," 190.

> Of crucial importance in justifying inventory science was the doctrine of utilitarianism. Victorian science in British North America both reflected and reinforced the criterion of practical value or usefulness. ... With roots set deep in the British experience, utilitarianism lent a sense of purpose and meaning to the arduous task of settling British North America. It drew science into a value system which had emerged out of the industrial and agricultural changes of late eighteenth-century Britain. Utilitarianism encouraged the belief that even social problems were manageable through quantification and the statistical accumulation of facts. Science in the utilitarian sense was a tool, not merely to locate sources of material wealth but also to construct an ordered society. Victorians saw science emerge from a peripheral leisure-class activity to become the fundamental basis of industrial society.[94]

The intellectual comprehension of nature embodied in the scientific inventories represented a central plotline in the Enlightenment recovery narrative. It was also the essential precursor to the Baconian dream of re-asserting embodied dominion over nature, harnessing nature for human purposes, through the "useful arts" of technological invention.

The ability of scientists to discover natural resource wealth to feed an incipient industrial economy endeared them to the political and economic elites of British North America, but also fostered a growing appreciation among the general population for the ability of science to command unruly nature. By the mid-nineteenth century, progressive utilitarianism had become one of the essential discourses in Canadian cultural life; by the end of the century, it had arguably become *the* central form of cultural understanding, displacing religion as the Dominion's principal moral source. William Westfall has argued that the growing faith in human progress and the consequent diminution in the cultural power of divine consciousness was prophetically heralded by Lord Durham (1792-1840), a man whose influential 1839 report presented economic development as the key to securing Canada's destiny:

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[94] Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 5-6.

> [In Durham's opinion, the] old belief that the loyalty of Canada rested upon reproducing in British North America the very image and transcript of the British constitution was no longer tenable. In the new Canada, prosperity and progress would assure social stability and order; for Canada to remain British, Britain must allow Canada to follow the American economic example. Progress was to replace religion as the new opiate of the masses.[95]

The rational comprehension of nature bore fruit in the technological colonization and exploitation of nature–embodied particularly in the extension of railway lines in the latter half of the nineteenth century–and bolstered Canadians' faith in progress. Paul Rutherford argues that by the turn of the twentieth century, the idea of progress was "the most hallowed maxim of the age."[96] Faith in this maxim was easy to come by, reliant upon the tangible evidence of technological advance and not, as in the Christian tradition, the "evidence of things unseen":

> The authority of science as a spearhead of the age of progress grew dramatically throughout Victoria's domains, mainly because of its apparent power to promote utilitarian ends. ... Science offered a chance for real prosperity, more than mere survival. Victorian Canadians, like Victorians elsewhere, marvelled at the technological signs of material progress and economic development–canals, railways, and electric telegraphs–and tended to identify these with science.[97]

The air of inexorability imparted to the idea of progress through the abundant evidence of its occurrence elevated the idea of continual advancement from a persistent hope–often vain–for a better future to a burgeoning optimism that the future *must* be better than the present and that human efforts would be vital to assuring this destiny. If the most highly regarded form of temporal consciousness among the Stoneys had been the "eternal present," an experience of divine, illimitable time, then in the emergent modern sensibility of mid nineteenth-century British North America, the focus and endpoint of social life was the future.

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[95] William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 111.

[96] Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 157.

[97] Zeller, *Inventing Canada*, 1-2.

Cataloguing and Inventorying Nature in Banff

The ideal of employing scientific knowledge as a means to material progress and national advancement was central in transforming the Canadian cultural perception of the North-West–including the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains–from the massive, uncolonized territory of traders and Indians into a region of almost mythical fecundity and mineral riches. The transformation of the Banff region into a distinct place in the vast homogeneous wastes of the West began in the late 1850s with the pioneering scientific expeditions led by Captain John Palliser (1817-1887) and George Gladman (1800-1863). These two expeditions represented both the hybridization of the geographical and inventory forms of science and their maturation by mid-century, with each crew aggressively probing nature with scientific instruments and analytic reason in an effort to find practicable transportation routes through the mountains and to locate raw materials for the projects of the central Canadian economy. The two scientific expeditions dramatically refigured the idea of the Canadian West. They shattered the idea of the region as an uninterrupted expanse of barrenness–tundra and desert–and replaced it with a vision of the area as a constellation of raw materials–rich soils, coal, and minerals–that could be exploited for human purposes. Canadian expansionists, who viewed the colonization of Rupert's Land as essential to the future health and wealth of Canada, seized upon the expeditions' findings. Invested with the growing authority of science, the reports produced by the two parties "provided sufficient material on the potential of the North-West to shift the weight of evidence in favour of the expansionist argument."[98] Whereas in the consciousness of premodern people like the Stoneys, it was divine revelation that annulled the homogeneity of space and created discrete places in the sacred cosmos, in the utilitarian consciousness of mid-century English-Canadian scientists and politicians, it was the human discovery of either valuable resources or of an extraordinary lack of resources that identified places as notable and worthy of singular regard. The spectrum of consciousness in this vision was not defined by Stoneys' premodern polarities of the sacred and the profane, but rather by their modern utilitarian equivalents–the profitable and the unprofitable.

Between the 1850s and 1900, inventory scientists uncovered a wealth of profitable places in the Banff region. Henry Youle Hind (1823-1908) of the Gladman expedition posited that "more or less continuous areas of this [coal] are to be found, along the flanks of the Rocky Mountains, from Mexico to the Arctic Sea."[99] Two decades later, and notwithstanding the less exuberant appraisal of the area by James Hector (1834-1907), George M. Dawson (1849-1901) revisited the eastern slopes and offered a similarly optimistic view of the area's mineral wealth, arguing that the ligneous deposits in the vicinity of the Belly and Bow rivers were "wide-spread and practically inexhaustible ... ,[an] available and easily accessible fuel for centuries of consumption on the most liberal scale."[100] Coal was not the only mineralogical resource discovered by scientists in the area. Dawson's paper also made reference to massive deposits of limestone in the region. Department of the Interior Reports in the 1880s made frequent references to the strong possibility that "rich ores" existed in and around Banff, and referenced scientific analyses of samples to support the claim.[101] Non-mineral resources were not neglected. Seeking to dispel the "incontestably erroneous" idea that the North-West was but sparsely covered with wood, the Canadian Department of Agriculture reported that "The whole eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains from the frontier of the United States to beyond the Peace River over a mean width of more than a hundred miles, is a country of forests, in which abound the finest building woods, except the hard woods and white pine."[102] It was not only the natural resources traditionally associated with industrial life–coal, precious metals, limestone, and timber–that were inventoried in the Banff area. In government reports through the late nineteenth century, favourable references were made to the area's "non-traditional" resources, including hot springs, sublime scenery, salubrious climate, and big game. The purpose of all these inventory surveys was clearly articulated in the 1882 *Annual Report* of the Department of the Interior: "It may reasonably be expected that, as the development of the North-West progresses, increased demands will be made upon the [Dominion Land Survey's Topographical] Survey for scientific exploration of those portions of the Dominion respecting which *so many facets of economic interest* have yet to be ascertained."[103] Nature, for inventory scientists, was approached not as a sacred cosmos manifesting the sovereignty of the divine, but rather as, to remember Taylor's term, a disenchanted world awaiting exploitation for human purposes.

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[98] Owram, 69.

[99] Henry Youle Hind, *Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1860), II, 349.

[100] George M. Dawson, *Report on the Region in the Vicinity of the Bow and Belly River, Northwest Territory: Embracing the Country from the Base of the Rocky Mountains Eastward to Lon. 110 @ 45', and from the 49th Parallel Northward to Latitude 51 @ 20'* (Montreal: Dawson, 1884), 5c, 127c.

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[101] See, for instance, Canada, Department of Agriculture, *North West of Canada: A General Sketch of the Extent, Woods and Forests, Mineral Resources and Climatology of the Four Provisional Districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Athabasca* (Ottawa: [s.n.], 1887), 39.

[102] Ibid., 14.

[103] Lindsay Russell, *Annual Report of the Department of the Interior* (*ARDI*), 1882, xii; emphasis mine.

Perhaps nowhere was the particularly disenchanted character of the inventorial approach to Banff's nature more fully manifest than in the geological explorations that occurred in the area. The work of Hind, Hector, and Dawson was all rooted in uniformatarianism, Charles Lyell's highly influential theory that explained mountains as the products of mechanical geological processes unfolding over millennia. The widespread adherence to and deployment of this theory in the decades after the 1840s testify to both the increasing separation in Canada of geological science from Christian theology and the substantial economic benefits of this more thoroughly secular form of science. Overthrowing the catastrophism of men like Thompson and Rundle, uniformatarianism replaced notions of divine agency in the formation of landforms with theories of universal natural law. Mountains were no longer perceived by scientists as either the instantaneous creation of a Primordial Deity nor the emblems of God's violent wrath at the first couple's sinfulness; they were, rather, simply matter-in-motion, folded, carved, cut, and thrust over the long sweep of Deep Time by the discernible laws of geological formation. Hector, surveying the landscape from the summit of Mount Loder–the same site that had occasioned Thompson's elegant reflections upon the "wild Order" of mountains shaped by a "Power Omnipotent'–wrote of the "great distinctness with which the eye was able to follow the gigantic and complex plications giving it more the look of a magnified geological model than a natural view."[104] The mountains in this view were certainly not, as they had been with the Stoneys, *axes mundi*, the home of ancestral spirits and dwelling places of the Holy, to be approached with reverent awe and dread. The mountains were disenchanted objects of scientific study, distinguished from the surrounding environment only by the particular theoretical models applied to understand them and possibly by the physical challenges associated with their exploration.

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[104] *The Palliser Papers*, ed. Irene Spry (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1968), 435.

Once potential sources of wealth had been revealed, it remained necessary for scientists–by then the equivalent and displacer of the medicine man–to confirm the veracity of the revelation through intensive testing. This rationalization of nature was undertaken to legitimize claims of wealth and to aid in resource administration. Examples of such rendering abound. Typical was G. Christian Hoffman's analysis of a semi-anthracite specimen found on the right bank of the Bow River near Canmore:

Analysis by fast coking gave:

Hygroscopic water	1.60
Volatile combustible matter	12.23
Fixed carbon	82.32
Ash	3.85
	100.00
Coke, per cent	86.17
Ratio of volatile combustible matter to fixed carbon	1: 6.73[105]

Similarly, chemical analysis of a six-and-one-half ounce ore specimen from the Bow River revealed traces of gold and "9.989 ounces to the ton of 2,000 lbs." of silver.[106] Every significant resource within Banff was at some time rendered into secondary, numerical qualities. The flow rate of the Bow River was quantified to determine its suitability for electricity-generating projects, the diameters of tree trunks along the eastern slopes carefully measured to aid in the crafting of conservation policies. Remarkably, even the sublime scenery of the Banff area–seemingly a realm of beauty impossible to subject to the logic of quantification–was rationalized into numbers. Recognizing the "hard-headedness" of House of Commons members toward assertions of the intangible benefits of nature, and noting the axiom that "no society will pay for something it does not value," J.B. Harkin (1875-1955), the first commissioner of parks (1911-1936), felt compelled to stress "the economic value of national parks ... ."[107] He did so by pointing out the vast revenues generated by tourism in European nations and even went so far as to determine the relative economic value of picturesque park land to that of the wheat field–$13.88 to $4.91, in favour of the mountain scenery.[108] During the Late Victorian period, both scientists and their political patrons accorded paramountcy to the abstract and secondary characteristics of nature. Whereas the Stoneys had possessed a profound appreciation for the vividly sensual qualities of their sacred cosmos, perceiving in creation's outer aspect the inner realities of *Waka Taga*, the scientific cataloguers of the Banff area and their political colleagues tended to eschew primary characteristics and focused instead upon the quantifiable realities of nature, shorn of direct reference to religious realities, as revealing nature's most significant truth–its value as raw material for human projects.

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[105] G. Christian Hoffmann, *Chemical Contributions of the Geology of Canada from the Laboratory of the Survey* (Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1885), 10M.

[106] Ibid., 23M.

A Disenchanted Vision of the Banff Hot Springs

Perhaps no resource in the Banff area was as extensively studied as the hot springs. During the 1887 House of Commons debates on creating the Rocky Mountains National Park, more than one member of parliament lamented the lack of scientific inventorial evidence available on the hot springs:

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[107] J.B. Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada: Extracts from the Papers of the Late Jas. B. Harkin, first Commissioner of the National Parks of Canada* (Saskatoon: H.R. Larson Publishing Company, 1957), 7, 9.

[108] Cited in Sid Marty, *A Grand and Fabulous Notion: The First Century of Canada's Parks* (Toronto: NC Press, 1984), 98.

> ... had we before us a report concerning those healing qualities from some scientific observer, if the Minister had sent some scientific expert to the springs to examine their healing properties, who had reported to the Government ... then we would be in a position, I think, to take action upon the Bill now before us.[109]

Unbeknownst to the parliamentarian, such a report had previously been prepared. Indeed, the springs had been examined by Mr. H. Sugden Evans in 1885, at "about the same date" that the government had established a reserve around the springs. In the succeeding decades, chemical analyses of the springs multiplied, as did references to the constituent elements of the healing waters by tourists. Like virtually every tourist to the springs, Edward Roper (1833-1909) was supplied with–and commented upon–a chemical analysis of the waters provided to him by the Banff Sanitarium's proprietor:

> In 100,000 parts of water there are the following saline and gaseous constituents:
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Sulphuric anhydride | 51.26 |
> | Calcium salts | 24.48 |
> | Carbon dioxide | 16.47 |
> | Magnesium oxide | 4.14 |
> | Sodium oxide (calculated) | 27.53 |
> | Silica | traces |
> | Organic matter | traces |
> | Total solids, | parts 123.88 |
>
> Dr. Brett kindly furnished me with the following analysis of the water from the hottest spring .... .[110]

Frequently cited in promotional materials and visitor accounts of the springs, such chemical analyses of the springs endued the waters with the prestige–perhaps even the mystique–of scientific credibility. Just as Hoffman's scientific investigations into the secondary qualities of coal from the Canmore region established that resource's suitability for industrial use and, thus, its profitability, so too the various reports on the chemical constituents of the springs confirmed the water's potency and thereby its revenue-generating potential as a tourist attraction. This process of inventorying the waters represents what tourism theorist Dean MacCannell considers to be the first step in the creation of a secular pilgrimage site:

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[109] *House of Commons Debates*, May 3, 1887, 237.

[110] Edward Roper, *By Track and Trail: A Journey Through Canada: With Numerous Original Sketches by the Author* (London and Calcutta: W.H. Allen, 1891), 360.

> The first stage of sight sacralization takes place when the sight is marked off from similar objects as worthy of preservation. ... This first stage can be called the *naming phase* of sight sacralization. Often, before the naming phase, a great deal of work goes into the authentication of the candidate for sacralization. Objects are x-rayed, baked, photographed with special equipment and examined by experts. Reports are filed testifying to the object's aesthetical, historical, monetary, recreational and social values.[111]

Though MacCannell refers to this process as a kind of sacralization, it represents a profoundly different kind of sacralization from that of the Stoneys. Within this vision, the "sacrality" of the hot springs resided not in their inherent divinity, but rather in the elemental, strictly physical components of the water.

The way in which the hot springs were understood provides intriguing insights into the growing faith of late nineteenth-century English-Canadians in the scientific perspective upon nature and the human body. In his report of 1885, Evans had only cautiously suggested that the probable emission of carbonic dioxide and nitrogen likely accounted for the medicinal qualities of the waters. In spite of his reluctance to address directly the healing potency of the waters, Deputy of the Minister of the Interior A.M. Burgess asserted that Evans' thorough scientific study of the springs had "made apparent" the "remarkable curative properties of these waters."[112] This assertion was buttressed by an article written by J. Murray M'Farlane and published in *The Canada Lancet* in 1890. M'Farlane quoted Evans's numbers and went on to affirm his belief that the saline and gaseous ingredients of the waters could offer relief of "hepatic congestion, haemorrhoids, laryngeal, pharyngeal, and bronchial catarrh, in early lung mischief, in rheumatism and gout, cutaneous disorders and constitutional syphilis, the later especially being benefited as many cow boys and other residents of this western country can testify."[113] Though M'Farlane also acknowledged the importance of Banff's natural beauty and pristine air as therapeutic to the ennuied souls of Canada's urbanites, he and others linked the curative properties of the springs directly to the physical components of the waters. Founded upon the scientific claims of inventory science and the increasingly authoritative claims of doctors, whose judgments, as Mariana Valverde points out, possessed "all the authority of science merely by virtue of their professional status,"[114] the belief in the curative powers of the springs represented an essentially mechanical vision denuded of the spiritual and social dimensions of healing accorded the springs by Stoney culture. Whereas for the Stoneys, healing was both a spiritual and a social act, reconciling the individual's inner disharmony with creation and society through an encounter with a divine presence, for late nineteenth-century Canadians, it was an almost entirely corporeal affair in which an individual's localized, physical malaise was ameliorated through the propitious efficacy of particular materials–in this case, the gaseous and saline constituents of the waters.[115]

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[111] Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), 44.

[112] A.M. Burgess, *ARDI*, 1886, Part I, xxi-xxii.

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[113] J. Murray M'Farlane, "Banff as a Health Resort," *The Canada Lancet* 23 (1890), 39.

[114] Mariana Valverde. *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 47.

[115] It is intriguing that the development and tourist inundation of the springs in the decades that followed the creation of Rocky Mountains Park seem to have stripped the sacred springs of their potency for the Stoneys: "But since the white people came, the strength has gone out of the water. That mysterious power that comes from the spirits is there no more. Probably the white people do not pray to get well... " (Clark 96).

Mapping Nature

At the same time that inventory science was rendering the resources of the Banff region into their secondary, mathematical characteristics, geographical science was rendering the spaces of Banff into geometric constructions. Surveys were necessary for creating transportation corridors, delineating the boundaries of the park and the various areas of activity within it, and creating maps for tourists. The first provision of the Rocky Mountain Parks Act of 1887 entailed the surveyed space of the new park:

> The tract of land comprised within the limits hereinafter set forth ... commencing at the easterly end of Castle Mountain Station grounds, on the Canadian Pacific Railway ... thence on a course about south thirty-five degrees east, ten miles more or less to a point in latitude seven minutes, six seconds and ninety-six hundredths of a second south of the point of commencement, and in longitude seven minutes, fifty-four seconds and ninety-eighth hundredths of a second east of the point of commencement .... .

It goes on with similar precision and evokes the arithmetic logic that rendered so much of the western wilderness into rational administrative blocks for the purposes of settlement. Just as "places" were created in the utilitarian consciousness through the revelation of potential resources for human projects, so too were they defined by the abstract spatial division of areas of what Prime Minister John A. Macdonald (1811-1891) called "usefulness" from the surrounding wilderness.[116] All the valuable resources within the new park boundaries–from "shrubbery" to "natural curiosities," from mineral waters to mines, traffic to timber, pasturage to protection of wildlife–were to fall under the "control and management of the Minister of the Interior."[117] This marking off, another form of MacCannell's site sacralization or secular consecration–literally, "setting apart"–represented the assertion of rational human sovereignty over an area of revealed profitability. This assertion of sovereignty was vital in establishing Banff as a desirable tourist destination: "Once set aside within the fixed and carefully policed boundaries of the modern bureaucratic state, the wilderness lost its savage image and became safe: a place more of reverie than of revulsion or fear."[118] Like Henry Youle Hind's discovery of a fertile belt in the Prairies, which undermined the old vision of the North-West as a homogeneous wasteland, the marking off of the park boundaries represented a major chapter in the Enlightenment recovery narrative by separating an inchoate garden, well-suited to human projects, from its wild surroundings.

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[116] Canada, Parliament, *House of Commons Debates*, 1887, vol. 2, May 3, 1887, 233.

[117] Canada, Department of the Interior, Statutes 50-51 Victoria, Chap. 32, "Rocky Mountain Parks Act, 1887"; rptd. in *Documenting Canada: A History of Modern Canada in Document*, ed. Dave De Brou and Bill Waiser (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1992), 154-55.

The rational, thoroughly modern vision that informed geographical science in Banff in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is manifest in the experiences of the surveyors who rendered the mountains into numbers, geometric figures, trigonometric calculations, and two-dimensional maps on paper.[119] Thompson, of course, had conducted a great deal of pioneering surveying in the Rockies, but his work was limited by the instruments available to him at the time–a compass, ten-inch brass sextant, and artificial horizon–and by his employer's understandable interest in mapping "a Canadian lowland–routes, rivers and passes easily accessible from the valley floors." R. W. Sandford points out that "Thompson ... was not a mountaineer. ... The summits are not even imagined yet [on his map]. It was a map of potential human habitation; crude directions for a scavenger hunt for silver and gold."[120] Those who followed in his tracks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries possessed more sophisticated technologies, used different methods, and were interested in a more comprehensive understanding of the area's landforms. Though mountaineering would ultimately become a highly romanticized undertaking in Banff, the earliest Canadian alpinists were largely civil servants engaged in rationalizing the untamed wilds of the West. Chief among the early surveyor-mountaineers in the Rockies was James Joseph MacArthur (1856-1925), who worked on topographical surveys in the mountains of the North-West Territory and British Columbia between 1886 and 1892. If MacArthur's reports are any indication, he was an avatar of the disenchanted engagement with nature, filling his notebooks with consistently crisp, bureaucratic, and objective analysis, utterly shorn of any superfluous detail or emotional flourish. Contemporary historian Don Thomson evokes the ideals of the Enlightenment recovery narrative in lauding the achievements of trailblazing Canadian geographic scientists like MacArthur: "... the work of pioneer land, railway and boundary surveyors which helped to transform a vast wilderness into ordered growth, has seldom stirred public imagination. Yet these men, too, subdued the unknown and replaced ignorance with knowledge."[121] As Thomson's remark makes clear, the surveyors in the Banff region were participants in the Canadian government's larger task of asserting its authority over the massive wilderness of western Canada, a region defined by its overabundance of what Northrop Frye has termed "the unknown, the unrealized, the humanly undigested."[122] The conversion of wilderness to rationalized space "advanced geometrically across the country, throwing down the long parallel lines of the railways, dividing up the farmlands into chessboards of square-mile sections and concession-line roads."[123] This transformation from "vast wilderness" into "ordered growth" represented the triumph of instrumental reason over an unruly nature, and made possible the distinctly modern form of engaging the land now dominant throughout Canada: "Space, on the other hand, is the way we meet land now–as an abstract commodity to be named, mapped, sold and subdivided."[124]

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[118] Cronon, 79.

[119] See I. S. MacLaren with Eric Higgs and Gabrielle Zezulka-Mailloux, *Mapper of Mountains: M. P. Bridgland in the Canadian Rockies, 1902-1930* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2005).

[120] R. W. Sandford, *The Canadian Alps: The History of Mountaineering in Canada, Volume 1* (Banff: Altitude Publishing, 1990), 57.

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[121] Don Thomson, *Men and Meridians: The History of Surveying and Mapping in Canada, Volume II: 1867 to 1917* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), 162.

[122] Frye, 220.

Given their pioneering status as climbers, it is perhaps not surprising that such civil servants/mountaineers were well-represented among the early membership of the Alpine Club of Canada, an organization that located its first club house in Banff. Indeed, one of the essential figures in the formation of the club was A.O. Wheeler (1860-1945), surveyor of the Rockies and a pioneer in the use of photogrammetry, a sophisticated technique for creating abstract models of the mountains by taking photographs of them from multiple perspectives and then geometrically delineating their form. The influence of men like Wheeler and Professor A.P. Coleman (1852-1939), a well-known central Canadian geologist, in forming the club may explain why the scientific understanding of mountains and glaciers achieved pride of place among the objectives contained in the organization's original mandate. As Zac Robinson points out, "[a]s in Britain, so in Canada the ideological underpinnings of early alpinism drew heavily from scientific traditions."[125] Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the club's membership and deep roots in scientific traditions, mountains frequently were approached as objects to be both rationally comprehended through scientific study and physically conquered through climbing. The fundamentally anthropocentric and domineering posture towards the mountains is evident in the writings of early Alpine Club of Canada members who climbed in the Banff area. Professor Coleman, a frequent visitor to the Rockies in the 1880s, cogently expresses many of the salient features of the scientific perspective upon nature when he writes of one of his excursions into the mountains:

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[123] Ibid., 224.

[124] Jeffrey McCarthy, "A Theory of Place in North American Mountaineering," *Philosophy & Geography* 5 (2002), 180.

[125] Zac Robinson, "Storming the Heights: Canadian Frontier Nationalism and the Making of Manhood in the Conquest of Mount Robson, 1906-13," *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22 (2005), 419.

> Our expedition was over, and we had come home disappointed in our main object; yet we did not part without some consolations. We had covered five hundred miles of unmapped mountain trails, had discovered and named many rivers, lakes, and passes, and climbed a dozen virgin mountains. ...
>
> Professor Stewart had mapped our route, checking the pedometer distances by observations for latitude, and I had kept a record of elevations as determined by aneroid and boiling-point thermometer.
>
> Best of all, we had passed a glorious two months battling with Nature in one of her wilder moods.[126]

In Coleman's passage we have many of the characteristic elements of the scientific approach to nature: the comprehension of nature through mapping and naming, the use of instruments to penetrate nature's secrets, and, above all else, the sense of nature as an adversary in the human quest for dominion. The Rev. C.W. Gordon (1860-1937), one-time resident preacher at Canmore and, under the name of Ralph Connor, bestselling Canadian author, captures rather more poetically the same sense of the human quest for dominion over nature in the premier issue of the *Canadian Alpine Journal*; perhaps making reference to Professor Coleman, Gordon imaginatively articulates the desire for conquest that the contemptuous calm of Cascade Mountain stirred in "the Professor":

> Day after day the Cascade gazed in steadfast calm upon the changing scenes of the valley below. The old grey face rudely scarred from its age-long conflict with the elements, looked down in silent challenge upon the pigmy ephemeral dwellers of the village at its feet. There was something overpoweringly majestic in the utter immobility of that ten thousand feet of ancient age-old rock; something almost irritating in its calm challenge to all else than its mighty self.

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[126] A.P. Coleman, *The Canadian Rockies: New and Old Trails* (Toronto: Henry Frowde, 1911; Calgary: Aquila Books, 1999), 169.

> It was this calm challenge, too calm for contempt, that moved the Professor to utter himself somewhat impatiently one day, flinging the gauntlet, so to speak, into that stony, immovable face: "We'll stand on your head some day, old man."[127]

Just as the uniformatarian approach to mountains had represented a sharp contrast to the Stoneys' notion of the Rockies as divine, enchanted places, so too these alpinists' anthropocentric and conquering cast of mind reflected a way of seeing mountains far removed from the premodern apprehension of them as emblems of divine sovereignty.

Resource Exploitation

Having established human dominion over Banff's resources and space through inventory and geographic science, politicians, entrepreneurs, and parks staff began the process of incarnating abstract, intellectual command of nature into control and profitability. During the Victorian period, as scientific understanding and technological capacity increased the human capacity to transform wilderness into garden, this exploitative understanding of the human relationship to nature became increasingly widespread and was reflected in changes to the English language: "In the nineteenth century, develop also became a transitive verb, with humans as the subject, nature as the object. That is, it became man's proper role on earth to 'develop nature,' meaning to make nature over into useful, marketable commodities. Undomesticated nature, civilized people believed, was incomplete and embryonic, a possibility waiting to be achieved."[128] Wilderness was understood as "wasted" unless converted to some socially utilitarian purpose; this maxim held for the early parks as much as it did for the Maritime coal fields. Robert Craig Brown puts the matter succinctly: "... the origins of Canadian national parks policy are to be found in the expansionist, exploitative economic programs of the National Policy of the Macdonald government after 1878."[129] Macdonald desired all of Canada's natural resources to be brought into "usefulness"–to become instrumental in the creation of the political and economic destiny of the nation. Remarkably, during the 1887 debates over the creation of the Rocky Mountains Park, only a single member of parliament and a lone senator questioned the compatibility of industrial activity with the preservation of the natural features that made Banff so attractive. The issue, as Janet Foster notes, "was scarcely discussed."[130] It was largely taken for granted that the whole of the natural world within the park boundaries would be made over into "useful, marketable commodities." The establishment of the Rocky Mountains Park was thus informed by a deeply disenchanted vision of the Banff area as a storehouse of raw materials to be developed in order to satisfy human need and desire.[131]

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[127] Rev. C.W. Gordon, D.D. (Ralph Connor), "How We Climbed Cascade," *Canadian Alpine Journal* 1:1 (1907), 58.

[128] Donald Worster, "Two Faces West: The Development Myth in Canada and the United States," in *One West, Two Myths: A Comparative Reader*, ed. C.L. Higham and Robert Thacker (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004), 25.

As a result of the many and varied scientific inventories conducted in the region, a host of industrial enterprises emerged to exploit the traditional natural resources within the boundaries of the Rocky Mountains Park both before and after its establishment in 1887. By the early 1880s, labourers were chopping down trees for track ties and cordwood. The American Eau Claire Lumber Company entered the region shortly thereafter and worked two timber berths in the Banff area in the decades following–one on the east side of Squaw Valley, another on Stony Squaw Mountain. In 1883, rumours of vast silver deposits at Castle Mountain were beginning to attract prospectors; by the following year, the new community of Silver City was booming, with a population of roughly 300. Coal mines operating at both Canmore and Anthracite by the late 1880s provided fuel for the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) trains working the transcontinental line. In 1903, mining operations at Bankhead were commenced. Two years later, the Western Canada Cement and Coal Company opened a plant at Exshaw and arranged to lease land within the park for limestone quarrying. Several of these ventures ultimately proved of little long-term significance: the Anthracite Mine was closed in 1897 and Silver City was abandoned only two years after its founding. Some also revealed the limitations of the human capacity to subdue nature: several men were killed during log runs for the Eau Claire Lumber Company and mining accidents claimed numerous lives.

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[129] Brown, Robert Craig, "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resource and the National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914," in *The Canadian National Parks: Today and Tomorrow*, ed. Nelson, J.G., and Scace, R.C. (Montreal: Harvest House, 1969), 58.

[130] Janet Foster, *Working for Wildlife: The Beginning of Preservation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 23. In later years, Superintendent of the Park Howard Douglas would even suggest that the felicitous combination of industrial activity and settlement actually *enhanced* the picturesque attractions of the Rocky Mountain Park: for Douglas, the mining village of Bankhead "instead of being a detriment to the beauty of the park, will, on the contrary, add another to the many and varied attractions of the neighbourhood... .it has already become a popular stopping place for tourists." "Rocky Mountains Park of Canada: Report of the Superintendent," *ARDI*, 1903-04, Part V, 11.

[131] It should be noted that the idea advanced by historians like Robert Craig Brown, Janet Foster, and Leslie Bella that the parks were originally created strictly for commercial purposes is not without its critics. Alan MacEachern has brilliantly critiqued Brown's original article on the "doctrine of usefulness" by pointing out some of the sources unavailable to Brown at the time and revisiting some of the documents Brown did use. He argues persuasively that the "doctrine of usefulness" was perhaps more limited in scope than Brown allows. Nonetheless, MacEachern seems willing to accept that this doctrine, properly circumscribed, may indeed have constituted "the dominant paradigm at the beginning of park history." See MacEachern's *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (Montreal; McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 16-18.

The exploitative, utilitarian sensibility that informed early development in the Banff area is perhaps most clearly embodied in the history of the hot springs. In 1883, three young railway workers, Franklin McCabe, and brothers Thomas and William McCardell stumbled upon several hot springs in Sulphur Mountain (then known as Terrace Mountain). Sid Marty, a historian of the national parks and a former park warden, casts a vision of the men's euphoria upon "discovering" the springs:

> It was not sulphur the three men smelled as they stripped and plunged into the crystal pool for the first swim. Their nostrils flared to the invigorating scent of dollar bills. The stalactites gleamed like bars of silver and gold, the roof glittered as if studded with diamonds. There were thousands of navvies due to start work next spring, and hot water bathing was a luxury item along the CPR right-of-way. More

> importantly, the railroad would bring the wealthier set, and the hot springs would draw them like honey draws bees.[132]

In response to this serendipitous gift, the men erected a fence around the site and built a shanty to stake their claim.[133] John A. Macdonald, Canadian prime minister, and William Cornelius Van Horne (1843-1915), general manager of the CPR, were also captivated by the discovery of the springs. In 1883, the CPR, whose interests were so intimately wed to those of Macdonald's government, "floundered toward bankruptcy. The immigrant flow had stopped. Land sales had not provided the promised revenue."[134] Banff's spectacular scenery and thermal waters augured well for the development of a tourist industry in the region. Such springs, after all, had been developed into profitable endeavours in Britain and other parts of Europe through thoughtful landscaping and clever marketing of the water's health-giving effects.[135] Macdonald envisioned waves of upper-class tourists flocking to the springs and spending their leisure in villas to be built around the site. Van Horne saw a way to induce passengers to travel to the West and spend lavishly on refined accommodations and entertainments. Through the discovery and affirmation of the revenue-generating power of the hot springs, a new "place" was born in the minds of the railway workers, Macdonald, and Van Horne.

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[132] Marty, 34-35.

[133] Their response recalls Rousseau's description of humanity's emergence from its natural (premodern?) state: "The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, to whom it occurred to say *this is mine*, and found people sufficiently simple to believe him, was the true founder of civil society... .Beware of listening to this imposter; You are lost if you forget that the fruits are everyone's and the Earth no one's." *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, ed. and trans. Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 161.

[134] Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001), 121.

[135] Joseph R. Skoski, review of *British Spas from 1815 to the Present: A Social History*, by Phyllis Hembry, *Victorian Studies* 42:1 (Autumn 1998/99), 158-61. Interestingly, the vogue of profitable spas frequented by the rich seemed to have ebbed in Britain by 1850, well before the discovery of the Banff hot springs, and have been replaced by the seaside resort. The clientele of springs changed to invalids seeking recuperation. Early promotional materials for the Banff hot springs targeted both demographics. While Dr. Brett's sanatorium catered to invalids, the creators and administrators of Rocky Mountains Park seemed to market the park primarily to the well-heeled Victorian tourist, not the sickly pilgrim in search of a cure.

The subsequent development of the site manifests a decidedly disenchanted approach to nature. Before tapping into the springs, the government felt the need to make its claim on the land by settling the many and often contradictory assertions of private individuals who staked their interest in the springs. Prior to proceeding with the establishment of the park, the government also commissioned studies to validate the springs' efficacy and to determine the best forms of administration. Scientific inventories and medical interpretations of the springs' constituent elements confirmed their healing power, while a study of privately-owned springs in the United States revealed a tendency toward spoliation and convinced government officials to maintain control of the site. Once sovereignty had been gained, the springs' potential profitability been confirmed, and administrative principles decided, the springs were thoroughly developed. An initially crude place accessed only by a hazardous climb down a tree trunk, the springs would eventually be incorporated into an elegant bathing facility. Piping was also installed to transport the springs' healing waters for use in various nearby venues. The nature of the springs' development places in sharp relief the differences between Stoney and English-Canadian sensibilities about the site. The Canadians' first reactions to the springs involved the assertion of human sovereignty, the rational investigation of how to maximize their profitability, and the technological transformation of the area to serve tourists. This response represents a dramatic contrast to the Stoney bathers' prayerful offering to the sovereign and beneficent spirit which had blessed them with the healing waters.

Railways and the Conquest of Nature

Of course, none of the exploitation of Banff's resources would have been possible without the transportation infrastructure to move materials and passengers to and from central Canada and beyond. Geographical scientists had established intellectually the most feasible course of transit through the mountains at the Kicking Horse Pass; it remained for engineers to determine how to build the line and for labourers to dig the rail bed, cut the ties, and lay the track. The effort to build the transcontinental line through Banff and the Rockies and Selkirks often assumed mythical proportions in both CPR literature and train travellers' accounts. In many of these publications, as in some of the works of the geographical scientists who prepared the way for the line, nature is represented as a fearsome adversary to be subdued:

> One could fancy a deadly feud between the railroad and the river, as if the wild passion of the latter were a protest against advancing civilization, and the invasion of primeval rights. Give a voice to the water and it seems to say to the railroad: "How dare you come near me, what right have you here? Don't you now that I have spent ages upon ages carving out this cramped and lonely passage for myself, and here you come haunting my course with your cruel shadow, and at times even running by my very side and driving me into narrow bounds–you thief, you robber of ground that I had cut out and hollowed and fashioned for myself–I hate you."[136]

In romanticized accounts of the CPR, the technical skill of the railwaymen who planned the line through the mountains was frequently referenced. One typical CPR publication lauded the "audacity of engineering" that had pushed the line through the mountains and enabled travellers to experience the thrill of "look[ing] down to where tall forest trees are small as match-sticks."[137] The brute labour necessary for subduing nature was similarly lauded; as an early correspondent describing the laying down of track in the Rockies put it,

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[136] James Carmichael, *A Holiday Trip: Montreal to Victoria and Return Via the Canadian Pacific Railway* (Montreal: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1888), 15.

> [r]ound me I saw the primaeval forest torn down, cut and hewed and hacked, pine and cedar and hemlock. Here and there lay piles of ties, and near them, closely stacked, thousands of rails. The brute power of man's organized civilization had fought with Nature and had for the time vanquished her. Here lay the trophies of the battle.[138]

One perceives in these (and many other passages) a typically Victorian exuberance in the human conquest of nature. Such conquest was easily woven into the nation-building narrative of the post-Confederation period; as I.S. MacLaren points out, "[i]n the case of the Canadian dominion, sublime geography served as both the obstacle to and, once matched by technology in the form of railways, the symbol of nation-making aspirations."[139]

By the end of 1883 much of the line had been set down and Siding 29 built. In the late 1880s, when Lady Agnes Macdonald (1836-1920) gleefully took her position on the cowcatcher, railway engineers and labourers had conquered the mountains: "Every turn becomes a fresh mystery, for some huge mountain seems to stand right across our way, barring it for miles, with a stern face frowning down on us; and yet a few minutes later *we find the giant has been encircled and conquered*, and soon lies far away in another direction."[140] In addition to facilitating resource exploitation, scientists, engineers, and railway labourers enabled the travelling class of people to visit the Rocky Mountains; they served as midwives in the birth of Banff as a destination, a *place*, in the minds of large numbers of Canadians.

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[137] Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *Summer Tours by the Canadian Pacific Railway* (Montreal: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1891), 86.

[138] Morley Roberts, *The Western Avenues* (1887; London and Toronto: J.M. Dent; New York: Sutton, 1924) 48-49.

[139] MacLaren, "Cultured Wilderness," 5.

[140] Lady Agnes Macdonald, "By Car and by Cowcatcher," *Murray's Magazine*, vol. 1 (Feb./Mar. 1887), 234; emphasis added.

The centrality of the arrival of steel to the community was well-expressed by Nicholas Flood Davin (1843-1901) during the House of Commons debates on the creation of the Park: "... the construction of that line ... has been the means of bringing into existence this very Banff. Without the Canadian Pacific Railway, the springs would be there, but they could not be utilised by the people."[141] Utilization, for Davin, as well as for Macdonald, was the way in which places were "brought into existence," called forth from undifferentiated space, wasted wilderness.

No symbol more fully communicated the ideal of utilization than the railway. To the Victorian imagination, the railway was the very image of the progress of science and industry in dominating nature: "... the railway, more than any other machine, embodied the material advances of the industrial revolution. ... Its powerful speed, its scheduled regularity, its precision and discipline reminded people that man had mastered time and space."[142] Railway literature about the Banff area often emphasized the locomotive's mastery of space and time; James Carmichael's comment is representative: "The C.P.R. inaugurated three elements in the comfort of the passenger, hitherto largely unknown to the general Canadian public, namely: civility, punctuality, and comfortable quarters for emigrant travellers."[143] The extension of the railway is here presented as the penetration of progressive English-Canadian values into the heart of the unruly wilderness, the CPR as the means to replacing the pre-Confederation West's pagan savagery with English-Canadian propriety, its indolent natural rhythms with the precise regularity of the clock, its rudimentary shelter with luxurious accommodation.

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[141] *House of Commons Debates*, May 3, 1887, 236.

[142] Den Otter, 21.

[143] Carmichael, 3.

The railway's role in planting the standard of civilization in the Banff wilderness was not limited to the laying of tracks. Indeed, in some ways, the Banff Springs Hotel and the associated railway hotels were the penultimate expression of the progressive extension of the metropolitan world into untamed nature. In 1888, when the first Banff Springs Hotel opened, Banff was a provincial settlement; though tied to the great national railway, it was hemmed in on all sides by an imposing natural world. The medieval chateau style of the hotel and its extensive amenities spoke of the fortified presence of civilization in the midst of the wilderness. In the CPR's promotional material, the railway hotels–like the railway cars that brought travellers to the hostelries–were heralded as emblems of the new, civilized order in the West: "In its mountain hotels, the Canadian Pacific Railway had brought the luxury of the city into the heart of the everlasting hills by placing charming hostelries here and there."[144] Evidently such promotions had their intended effect. Hotel guests frequently juxtaposed the wilderness that had been with the civilization that now was. Lodging at the hotel in the late 1880s, John Maclean (1851-1928) wrote as follows:

> Along a good road, cut out of the heart of the forest, we travelled until their rose in front of us, half a mile distant from the Sanatorium, the object of our search. A beautiful, cone-shaped hill has been selected as the site for this structure, and with indomitable perseverance and energy the top has been literally sliced off, to secure a level and solid foundation.[145]

Just as the construction of the railway had represented in its engineering and execution the human conquest of the wilderness, luxurious Pullman cars and the Banff Springs Hotel, set upon a decapitated hill, embodied the next chapter of the Enlightenment recovery narrative–the remaking of the natural world in the image and likeness of civilized society. Perhaps no more striking articulation of this ideology exists than in a later account of the environment of the second Banff Springs Hotel, constructed in the late 1920s after a fire razed the earlier building: "From the windows, looking east, the scene is theatrical. The back-drop was waiting for ages. The site was prepared, and obvious."[146] Here is a remarkable statement of the progressive, utilitarian vision flowing from Bacon and his heirs. Nature, in this conception, awaits the exercise of human dominion to be consummated.

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[144] Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *The Canadian Rockies* (s.l., The Company, 190-), 7.

[145] John Maclean, *The Indians: Their Manners and Customs* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1889), 190.

Progress through Improving and Managing Nature

The idea that nature requires human activity to reach its fullness was embodied in the process of making the Rocky Mountains Park (after 1930, Banff National Park). Through geographical and inventory science, abstract, rational control had been established over the park's spaces and the area's resources. Industrial development of many of the traditional raw materials within the park had commenced. Nature had been thoroughly subdued. And yet the mythic heart of the Enlightenment vision was not merely to understand the world, nor simply to exploit it, but rather to exercise dominion as a form of co-creation–to bring Nature to its completion by transforming wilderness into garden. Robert Craig Brown points out that "the term 'wilderness' was scarcely used in discussion of parks policy and then only to suggest a primitive condition demanding 'improvement' in order to 'make a park.'"[147] Much of the rhetoric around the creation of the park centred on how to improve the area's wilderness so that it might prove "useful." Contrary to the Stoneys, who viewed nature as holy in itself, the sovereign realm of the Great Spirit, the architects of the park saw wilderness as a raw material in need of transformation. The belief in the necessity of improvement bears witness to a European conception of the human relationship to nature–first articulated centuries ago and central to the Baconian vision of creation–a conception that asserted that "for the land to be fully possessed, it must be cultivated: tilled, improved, developed. The result: a promised land, a paradise, a garden of delights."[148] In the decades following the establishment of Rocky Mountains Park, the nature and culture of Banff area would be thoroughly "improved" with a host of new facilities and natural features that would offer Canadians a new "promised land" and "garden of delights."

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[146] Frederick John Niven and John Innes, *Canada West* (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930), 79.

[147] Brown, 58.

From the creation of the park until 1911, the natural world in and around Banff was dramatically changed to accommodate an extensive tourist infrastructure. Roads were built to transport visitors to the rapidly developing area, which eventually included the magisterial Banff Springs Hotel, Dr. R.G. Brett's Sanitorium, a boat house, animal paddock, zoo, aviary, and Museum of Natural History.[149] With the appointment in 1911 of J.B. Harkin as the first commissioner of the national parks, the rate of improvement accelerated. Considered both "The Father of National Parks" and "The Father of Tourist Travel," Harkin initiated road-building projects throughout the Rocky Mountain parks to open what he saw as a profound source of human betterment to Canadians, including the Banff Windermere Highway, opened in 1923. Other developments in Banff during his tenure included the Banff Springs Golf Course (1911), the Mount Rundle Campground (1914), the Banff Recreation Ground (1914), the Administration Building Gardens (1930s), the Banff Airfield (1930s), and the Mount Norquay ski area (1930s).[150]As to visitors, mass tourism became the defining feature of the Banff area. For Harkin, these transformations were vital to ensure that Canada's enviable natural patrimony would not be wasted:

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[148] Ramsay Cook, "1492 and All That: Making a Garden out of Wilderness," in *Consuming Canada*, 62-63.

[149] Robert C. Scace, *Banff: A Cultural-Historical Study of Land Use and Management in a National Park Community to 1945* [Calgary, Dept. of Geography, University of Calgary, 1968], 40-42.

[150] Scace, 105.

> Canada possesses undoubtedly, as our orators often declare, a "wealth of natural scenery," but this wealth is at present only potential and whether we draw large revenues from it or not depends entirely upon a policy of development. It seems probable that the time may soon come when the tourist industry will not only be organized but standardized.[151]

The development of nature, as well as the organization and standardization of the tourist experience, were understood in much the same way that the extraction of coal and the regularization of transportation routes and schedules was seen–as a means to capitalize on a natural resource. In the case of the national park at Banff, however, as Van Horne and others noted, the natural scenery was not to be extracted and shipped to manufacturers and consumers elsewhere, but rather to be developed onsite, with tourists imported from every corner of the globe.

The Department of the Interior's annual reports from 1885 until 1911 (when the Dominion Parks Branch became an agency within the department and gained its own director) contain detailed accounts of the Herculean task of reshaping nature to accord with the aesthetic desires and practical needs of tourists. Transforming the landforms and flora of Banff was a primary task for early park administrators. Of George Stewart, the first superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park, Eleanor Luxton writes in tones that echo the accounts of railway workers in the Rockies: "Virtually unaided, he had to hew, blast, ditch and drain a wilderness."[152] He also had to shape the wilderness in ways appealing to the picturesque aesthetic sensibilities of European and North American tourists. Only two years after the park was created, Superintendent Stewart noted that "the want of variety in our foliage has been constantly remarked." He promptly imported forty thousands trees from the "North-Western States" to diversify the population.[153] He also planted wild rice from Ontario in lakes and streams throughout the park in an effort to induce wildfowl to frequent the area. In order to provide access to these and other newly-formed and picturesque attractions, Stewart's staff hacked their way through the native plant life to create and extend roads and trails. Annual reports were replete with information about the costs of new road construction and the tally of total mileage of byways within the park. CPR promotional materials touted the important work in this regard done by Stewart, who was presented as "fast opening [Banff's scenery] up with splendid roads, bringing the natural beauties of the place to the front in a truly artistic manner."[154] The mammoth efforts put into early road-building in Banff did not go unnoticed. One British tourist wrote that, "[t]hese roads [in Banff] are the best we saw in Canada."[155] Another British tourist commented favourably on Banff's many trails, noting that "[a] forest in Canada that is untouched by the axe is apt to present an unkempt look; trunks of uprooted trees lie about in all directions, and make the wayfarer's progress difficult, to say the least."[156] In addition to importing new flora and opening up access routes to view the region's greenery, park administrators sought to protect the beauty of the plant life indigenous to the area. In the early years of the park, many fires engulfed the region's forests, leaving in their wake desolate wastes of blackened trunks shorn of their vital greenery. Fires were traced to sparks from railway locomotives, blazes set by Natives and prospectors to clear brush, and the industrial activities of area mines. Prior to the first decade of the twentieth century, fire prevention within the park fell, as Ted Hart points out, "to the small police force, assisted by railway employees and volunteer local citizens ... ."[157] In 1907, Howard Douglas (1850-1929), George Stewart's successor as superintendent of the Rocky Mountains Park and later the commissioner of parks under the Dominion Forestry Branch, sought to remedy this deficiency by appointing Howard A. Sibbald as chief game guardian and tasking him and his men with fighting forest fires in the park. After Harkin's appointment as commissioner of parks in 1911, the protection of forest within the park was strengthened: industrial logging within the park boundaries was ended and new technologies–like a telephone system for the wardens and gasoline-powered water pumps–were introduced to preserve Banff's flora.

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[151] James B. Harkin, "Dominion Parks: Report of the Commissioner," *ARDI,* 1920, Part V, 8.

[152] Eleanor G. Luxton, *Banff: Canada's First National Park* (Banff: Summerthought, 1975), 67.

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[153] George A. Stewart, "Report of Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI*, 1888 , Part VI, 5.

[154] Carmichael, 16.

[155] James Lumsden, *Through Canada in Harvest Time: A Study of Life and Labour in the Golden West* (London: T.F. Unwin, 1903), 187.

[156] Herbert Grange, *An English Farmer in Canada and a Visit to the States: Being Notes and Observations by a Practical Farmer and Commercial Man on Canada as a Field for British Capital and Labour* (London: Blackie and Son, 1904), 78.

The growing interest in better managing Banff's natural resources evident in the development of fire-fighting teams and technologies reflected the burgeoning of conservationist sentiment in Canada. Early development in Banff was deeply disenchanted, viewing the natural world as a superabundant repository of resources to be exploited for the building up of western Canada.[158] But the exploitative mentality–particularly one linked to a notion of superabundance–had its necessary limitations; indeed, at the heart of this crudely utilitarian philosophy and practice were the obvious dangers of overuse and scarcity. Conservationist sentiment in Canada was evident among a handful of dedicated civil servants in late nineteenth-century Canada–including men like Douglas and Harkin with intimate links to Banff–but lacked broad cultural or political support. The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a rapid growth in the awareness and political institutionalization of conservationist values, a development manifest in the establishment of the Canadian Forestry Association in 1900 and the Canadian Commission of Conservation in 1909. Much of the impetus for this growth came from south of the border, where two streams of conservationist thought were well-developed: the scientific, utilitarian stream associated with Gifford Pinchot (1865-1946) and the romantic, even mystical, stream associated with John Muir (1838-1914).[159] Between the 1900s and the 1920s, government-administered scientific conservationism was predominant in Canada and emphasized the careful management of natural resources in order to ensure long-term sustainability and utilization. Clifford Sifton (1861-1929), the first chairman of the Commission of Conservation, succinctly described the general philosophy of the "wise use" conservationism:

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[157] Hart, *The Place of Bows*, 211.

[158] Brown, Robert Craig, "The Doctrine of Usefulness: Natural Resource and the National Park Policy in Canada, 1887-1914," in *The Canadian National Parks: Today and Tomorrow*; ed. Nelson, J.G., and Scace, R.C. (Montreal: Harvest House, 1969), 46-62.

> If we attempt to stand in the way of development, our efforts will assuredly be of no avail either to stop development or to promote conservation. It will not, however, be hard to show that the best and most highly economic development and exploitation in the interests of the people can only take place by having regard to the principles of conservation.[160]

This conservationist sensibility was reflected in Banff by Superintendent Douglas, who noted as early as 1902 the growth of a "[p]opular interest more practical than sentimental in whatever touches the welfare of the country's forests ... ."[161] Dr. Harlan I. Smith from the

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[159] Foster, 34. See also R. Peter Gillis and Thomas R. Roach, "The American Influence on Conservation in Canada," *Journal of Forest History* 30 (1986): 160-74.

[160] Commission of Conservation Canada, *Report of the First Annual General Meeting Held at Ottawa, January 18th to 21st, 1910* (Ottawa: The Mortimer Co., 1910), 6.

[161] Howard Douglas, "Report of Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI*, 1901-02, Part V, 6.

Museum of the Geological Survey in Ottawa, also suggested that the museum in Banff could be an ideal institution for the dissemination of the ideals of scientific forestry.[162]

The Canadian response to the growing awareness of nature's fragility was thus rooted in precisely the same kind of scientific mentality that had initially cleared the way for the unregulated exploitation of the West's resources. In the late nineteenth century, inventory science served to illuminate the wealth of coal, timber, lime, and mineral springs for technological exploitation; in the early twentieth century, inventory science served to catalogue the natural resources of the West so that they might be properly managed. In both instances, a deeply anthropocentric perspective upon nature is evident. The natural world is to be used for human needs and purposes. But whereas the ideology that governed John A. Macdonald's vision of Canada viewed science as a servant of largely unregulated exploitation of nature, the conservationist perspective ascendant among luminaries like Clifford Sifton viewed science as the necessary corrective to a crassly exploitative posture toward nature, seeing accurate inventorying and scientific analysis as the keys to developing rational policies to regulate both the use and the non-use of resources. Significantly, though scientific conservationism was critical of humanity's unrestrained exploitation and wanton destruction of forest resources, it nonetheless represented an affirmation of the ideology of man infinite in its insistence that human beings possess sovereignty over creation and must exercise that sovereignty in order to bring nature to its full human use. In both the artistic diversification of flora and its more scientific protection, humanity serves as the agency drawing nature out of its embryonic state, transforming wilderness into garden, managing and consuming the new paradise.

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[162] Commission of Conservation Canada, *Report of the Seventh Annual General Meeting Held at Ottawa, January 18-19, 1916* (Montreal: the Federated Press, 1916), 77-80.

The remaking of the fauna within the park evinces the same sensibility. Prior to the establishment of the National Park in 1887, the government commissioned a report from W.F. Whitcher on the animal life in the Banff region. Whitcher believed it necessary to "manage" the natural world within the reservation in order to ensure pleasure for its visitors and profits for its owners. He proposed drastic changes to the fauna of the park:

> ... [bears] need not be wantonly killed nor dealt with as we should do with the lupine, vulpine and feline vermin that prey upon furred and feathered game with savage impartiality.... [C]ountless innocent and gay plumaged birds it is extremely desirable to let alone for the present at least. They form part and parcel of living ornaments interesting to visitors on every public reservation. ... Wolves, coyotes, foxes, lynxes, skunks, weasels, wild cats, porcupines and badgers should be destroyed. ... The same may be said of eagles, falcons, owls, hawks and other inferior rapaces, if too numerous; including also piscivirous specimens such as loons, mergansers, kingfishers, and cormorants.[163]

Though Whitcher's remarkable directives were not zealously followed, the idea of eliminating "noxious beasts and birds"–particularly those that preyed on the valuable game in the park–and bringing in more acceptable creatures remained a practice in the park. As Alan MacEachern points out, seemingly barbaric though Whitcher's logic with respect to predator control may appear to the environmentally sensitive consciousness of the present, it accorded entirely with mainstream thought during his tenure:

> There was no need for Whitcher to defend his conclusions; his reasoning would be clear to anyone of his time, or even fifty years later. ... Predators were seen as cutting against the divine grain, usurping what was otherwise human's dominion, and doing so as if with malicious design (hence laughing hyenas, wily coyotes). Eradicating them was not merely a duty, it was a pleasure.[164]

In addition to eliminating predators and in order to effect the "future abundance and perpetuity of every description of native wild beasts, birds and even fishes," Whitcher recommended bringing non-indigenous species like quail and pheasants into the park and enacting "legislative measures and artificial methods... applied to the cultivation and control of its fauna."[165] The results of these innovations, for Whitcher, would enrich the park's "living ornaments" and create a model kind of nature, a varied and picturesque landscape that would not only delight tourists, but would also increase game populations by luring discerning creatures into the park's protective boundaries.[166] Although the conservationist movement significantly undercut support for many of Whitcher's views, the belief in "balancing nature" remained central to park administration. Indeed, an aggressive policy of killing a variety of predators within the park remained in place until the 1920s. In 1918, Harkin provided an attractive incentive for the elimination of park predators. Park wardens who killed wolves, coyotes, and mountain lions were permitted to keep the pelts. As Ted Hart points out, "[t]his lifted the campaign to new heights, as income from this activity could reach an equivalent bonus of ten to fifty percent of a warden's annual salary."[167]

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[163] W.F. Whitcher, "Report," *ARDI*, Part I, 87.

[164] Alan MacEachern, "Rationality and Rationalization in Canadian National Parks Predator Policy," in *Consuming Canada*, 198.

The general policy in the parks with respect to animals was one of managerial oversight. They were perceived as natural resources to be administered in much the same way as the less sentient riches of the park. In Banff, Superintendent Howard Douglas appealed to the legislative precedents to claim control over the creatures within his domain: "According to the decisions of the highest courts, game is the property of the state. It should, therefore, like other public property, be carefully administered for the public good."[168] The idea of animals as commodities was frequently expressed among Canada's conservationists of the period. In his annual reports, Superintendent Douglas frequently made reference to the money spent on maintaining the park's fauna as "a permanent and valuable investment of the Dominion annually."[169] Although this conception of animals as "public property" and a "valuable investment" was perhaps most apparent in the park's game preservation policies, it was also evident in the establishment of live animal displays and the exhibitions at the Museum of Natural History. The buffalo corral, a particularly popular attraction for local tourists, was valued as one of the few places in North America in which the once-abundant beast could be seen: "This is about the centre of the Canadian National Park, with its buffalo corral, where a remnant of the mighty herds that once roamed all over Western Canada is religiously preserved."[170] For those tourists with a scientific curiosity about the park's animal populations, the Museum of Natural History offered a wealth of stuffed fauna aesthetically arranged. Both the live animal pens and the taxidermy displays of Banff testify to the power of the utilitarian vision in the park. Created in large measure to generate profit, these forms of animal exhibition represented nature in an utterly domesticated form. In both instances, the park's fauna was colonized and rendered harmless for the viewing pleasure of tourists.

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[165] Whitcher, 93.

[166] Whitcher put it this way: "The tendency of animal existence will naturally be towards the sheltered and protected central conservatory, especially during periods of reproduction" (93).

[167] Hart, *The Place of Bones*, 224.

The English-Canadian transformation of the flora and fauna of Banff between 1885 and 1930 testifies to a dramatically different conception of nature than that possessed by the Stoneys. Absent entirely is the Stoney conception of nature as inherently sacred and directed by the divine; nature, in the English-Canadian utilitarian vision, is a resource to be managed by human society. The Stoneys believed that *Waka Taga* endowed certain plants with strong spiritual and physical medicine. The tree used as the central pole in the Sun dance lodge was understood as the Tree of Life, an *axis mundi* connecting heaven and earth. For Canada's earliest conservationists, most of whom, as Janet Foster points out, were civil servants, forests possessed no inherent value.[171] They acquired value only if they were deemed, through scientific study and economic argument, to be profitable to human society. Like the springs that Nicholas Flood Davin claimed were of no worth without a railway line to reach and exploit them, so too forests unsuited for use–either as industrial commodity or picturesque attraction–might as well not have existed for English-Canadian politicians and administrators. The same sensibility is evident in attitudes toward animals. For the Stoneys, animals were both spiritual and physical beings and they shared a profound ontological relationship with human beings. In the West, animals had consistently been viewed as subordinate to humans. From Adam's power to name animals to Descartes' vision of creatures as machines, impelled entirely by the power of chemical impulse to the Enlightenment thinkers who established humanity at the pinnacle of a new chain of being based upon rational capacity, animals have been understood as separate from and inferior to humans, as beings lacking personality and souls. The idea of animals as human property, as an investment to be guarded, is entirely consistent with such conceptions. These different ideas about flora and fauna strike at the heart of the distinction between premodern Stoney and modern English-Canadian views of nature. For the former, the whole of creation was sacred as a result of its participation in the living spirit of the divine; the Stoneys acknowledged *Waka Taga* as the supreme sovereign of nature, and sought to align their individual and social identities with this eternal moral source. For many modern English-Canadians, nature was a soulless system of matter-in-motion, regulated by universal laws discoverable by science. Humanity possessed dominion over nature and was capable of transforming the wilderness into the garden through the application of science and technology.

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[168] Howard Douglas, "Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI, 1902-03*, Part VII, 6.

[169] Howard Douglas, "Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI, 1900*, Part IV, 4.

[170] Grange, 75.

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[171] Foster, 3.

Progress through Improving and Managing Culture

The natural world was not the only sphere seen as requiring improvement. The cultural world of the Banff area was also seen as in need of development. Improvement in this regard was effected by importing English-Canadian society and displacing the Stoneys from their former hunting grounds within the park. Unlike the United States' earliest parks, which were largely remote from civilization and created to be devoid of both industrial activity and permanent inhabitants, the Rocky Mountains Park was established with the understanding that mining, logging, and grazing would take place within the boundaries of the reserved lands and that the Banff townsite would be integral to the development of the new park. Ted Binnema and Melanie Niemi argue that in the late nineteenth century, "Canadian national park managers thought it was normal for national parks to have permanent inhabitants."[172] This basic assumption resulted in dramatic growth in the park's resident population and in the social infrastructure of Banff. A 1920 promotional pamphlet for Banff itemized the many businesses and services available in the town to serve residents and tourists:

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[172] Theodore (Ted) Binnema and Melanie Niemi, "'Let the Line be Drawn Now': Wilderness, Conservation, and the Exclusion of Aboriginal People from Banff National Park in Canada," *Environmental History* 11 (October 2006): 724.

> Fine churches embracing all denominations; a Bungalow public school in which grades are taught up to entry into the University; a private school for boys and girls up to twelve years; a first-class fire brigade; a detachment of the Canadian Mounted Police (formerly called the Royal North-west Mounted Police), a modern, very comfortable hospital, four physicians, three drug stores, dentists, four large hotels which are open the year round, and three more of the larger hotels are open during the summer months, numerous private rooming and boarding houses, a large departmental store, three grocery and provision stores, three meat markets, two gent's furnishing stores, a bank, three photo and supply houses, several novelty stores, a jeweler and watchmaker, two shoe repair shops, a first-class café open at all hours, several lunch, fruit and soft drink shops, two barber shops, four first-class garages, a steam laundry, a lumber yard, billiard and pool parlors, a moving picture theatre where nothing but the latest and most desirable pictures are shown, two weekly newspapers and a winter population of upwards of fifteen hundred of the most hospitable citizens which can be found any place in the wide Dominion of Canada.[173]

This is a former wilderness remade in the image and likeness of English-Canadian civilization, a place in which the Victorian tourist could enjoy nature's splendour without sacrificing comfort.

The growth of English-Canadian society within the park was seen by politicians and early administrators as a necessary and natural good. The continuing presence of the Stoneys within the park, however, was not. Despite having entered into a treaty in 1877 and being granted a reserve around the Morleyville mission, the Stoneys continued to travel to the mountains to hunt and pray. This disturbed parks officials, who linked the Natives to the destruction of both flora and fauna. W.F. Whitcher asserted that "[e]xceptions of no kind whatever should be made in favor of Indians. Those who now invade that territory are stragglers and deserters from their own reserves, where they are well cared for in food and clothing at the public expense."[174] Park Superintendent George A. Stewart argued in 1887 that, "if possible the Indians should be excluded from the Park. Their destruction of the game and depredations among the ornamental trees make their too frequent visits to the Park a matter of great concern."[175] The rhetoric around Natives and wildlife at times was accented with an apocalyptic element, predicting the extinction of whole species in the region: as Superintendent Howard Douglas, perhaps the most vociferous opponent of Stoney hunters within the park, put it, "in short time this vast tract of mountain land, abounding in all that is required for the sustenance of wild animals, will be deserted, unless the Indians are compelled to live on their reserves. Let the line be drawn now; if we wait longer, the game will be gone."[176] The fear that the Stoneys would damage the "ornamental trees" and, more importantly, deplete game stocks that would attract tourists and hunters from around the world led the government gradually but relentlessly to erode tribal access to their traditional hunting grounds in the park.[177]

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[173] Barney W. Collison, *Banff Canadian National Park in Winter. Canada's Winter Playground* (Banff: s.n., 1920), 4, 6.

[174] Whitcher, 92.

Much of the criticism leveled against the Stoneys raised the issue of their "unsportsmanlike" hunting practices, which contravened the ethic of men like William Hornaday, a seminal figure in the North American game conservation movement. Stoney violations of Hornaday's highly influential "Sportsman's Code of Ethics" included hunting for subsistence and selling the meat and heads of their kills, rather than hunting for sport and the well-deserved trophy of a mounted head. Equally disturbing to English-Canadians were the Stoneys' hunting practices. W.N. Millar, the district inspector of forest reserves in Alberta, wrote in 1914 that the Stoneys "killed game vastly in excess of the legal restrictions

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[175] Stewart, "Report of Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI*, 1887, Part VI, 10.

[176] Howard Douglas, "Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park" *ARDI*, 1903, Part VII, 6.

[177] A similar process took place in Jasper, where utilitarian logic–the greatest good for the greatest number–removed Métis from the region through a decree that made their presence within the park illegal. As I.S. MacLaren puts it, "[s]overeign in right of the Crown, the valley becomes the site of a disturbing paradox in which the impersonal national collectivity dispossesses its personal predecessors by abjectly and summarily identifying them as criminals" (17).

[and] exercise no restraint whatever in the matter of age or sex. ... [T]he confining of game killing to males alone is a thing absolutely incomprehensible to a Stony."[178] A year later he condemned their "extermination of whole bands of sheep or elk whenever possible, the killing of moose when yarded up in the winter, the use of dogs and the making of drives in which the whole camp, men, women and children participate, the slaughter of game at all seasons of the year and its constant harrying and disturbance regardless of season."[179] As a result of these sins against the increasingly influential conservationist creed promoted by sportsmen's associations, politicians, and park administrators, the Stoneys' access to their former hunting grounds was over time limited by changes to the park boundaries, new conservationist regulations, and stricter enforcement of existing regulations.

Central to the critique of the Stoneys' hunting practices was the view that Natives lacked a properly modern, utilitarian worldview. The idea of Natives as "unscientific" was continually expressed. Mabel Williams (b. 1878), one of the government's most skilled authors of promotional materials for the parks, trumpeted the glories of the Stoneys' culture while simultaneously encouraging park visitors to consider the way in which the English-Canadian, progressive vision of the Rockies had superseded the antiquated, superstitious worldview of the Native people. Williams wrote of how the Cree "were apparently ignorant of their [the Banff hot springs'] medicinal qualities, regarding them with superstitious dread." This irrational fear existed in pointed contrast to the English-Canadian scientific appreciation for the therapeutic value of the springs' "[a]rtificially prepared radioactive waters ... [which] were found to cause a multiplication of the red blood cells, stimulation of the digestive processes and increased elimination of uric acid."[180] Similarly, Williams suggests that for many years in the Rockies, "the inroads of Indian hunters prevented the wild life from increasing to any appreciable extent."[181] In another passage, Williams implicitly juxtaposes such Native "wastefulness" with rationalized wildlife administration, linking the former with the Fall and the latter with a re-capturing of Eden:

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[178] W.N. Millar, *Game Preservation in the Rocky Mountains Forest Reserve* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1915), 20.

[179] W.N. Millar, "The Big Game of the Canadian Rockies: A Practical Method for its Preservation," in *Conservation of Fish, Birds and Game* (Toronto: Methodist Book and Publishing House, 1916), 113.

> It is a paradise for wild life, guarded on all sides not by flaming swords, but by the eternal vigilance of an administration which loves and is determined to protect the wild life heritage of this beautiful domain.[182]

The Natives' inability to perceive the medicinal benefits of the springs or the aesthetic value of wildlife is paralleled, Williams suggests, by their almost sub-human incapacity scientifically and technologically to master the nature that surrounds them. She writes, "the Shuswaps ... built their half-buried dwellings at the base of Mount Rundle where now the tourist plays golf, but the Indians left few more marks of their habitation than the wild animals."[183] Her logic provides a justification–more or less explicit–for dispossessing Natives of the land and creating golf courses, wildlife wardens, and hot springs resorts.

The process of dislocating Native people from their traditional haunts was re-enacted throughout the expansion of settlement and government in the West. Rationale for their removal often tapped into the powerful currents of utilitarianism and its progressive ideology. Daniel Francis describes this ideology succinctly: "Because they did nothing with the resources of the land–built no cities, tilled no fields, dug no mines–Indians deserved to be superseded by a civilization that recognized the potential for material progress."[184] Parks officials viewed Stoney hunting as a wanton waste of a valuable natural resource. Within this conceptual system, the Stoneys' lack of a progressive vision of material progress rooted in the scientific understanding and exploitation of the natural world, would necessarily consign them, like the wilderness they once inhabited, to history:

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[180] Mabel B. Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks* (1921); 2d ed. (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1924), 21.

[181] Williams, *Jasper National Park* (Ottawa: F.A. Acland, 1928), 133.

[182] Ibid., 83.

[183] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, 7.

> In what has been called "enlightenment anthropology"–though I think that places the development too late–the function of the term "savage" was to assert the existence of a state of nature where neither "heavy-plough agriculture nor monetarized exchange" was practiced and from which, therefore, civil government was absent. Moreover, civil government, agriculture and commerce were assumed to exist only where land had been appropriated–where "possessive individualism" had taken root. Thus the wilderness was inhabited by nomadic savages, without agriculture or laws, where the land had never been appropriated. Consequently, when Europeans set about transforming the wilderness into a garden, they were engaged in taking possession of the land. "The ideology of agriculture and savagery," in the words of J.G.A. Pocock, "was formed to justify this expropriation."[185]

Improvement through civilization–meaning settlement, agriculture, and English-Canadian cultural assimilation–was the national prescription. Indeed, as Binnema and Niemi point out, the continual scaling back of the Stoneys' ability to hunt along the eastern slopes of the Rockies not only to conserve game stocks, but also to advance "one of the central goals of the DIA [Department of Indian Affairs] at the time: the civilization and assimilation of aboriginal people."[186] The Stoneys, like the animals with whom they were sometimes identified in popular discourse, were to be removed from their former ways of life and protected on reserves by government officials: "The wild animals are not to be swept off the face of the West by the human flood. Like their Indian brothers, they are to have their sanctuaries."[187] This displacement of the living memory of the Banff area is emblematic of the displacement of the premodern vision of the natural world throughout western Canada by a progressive utilitarianism.

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[184] Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), 25.

[185] Cook, 73.

[186] Binnema and Niemi, 738.

The Enlightenment Recovery Narrative: The Second Eden

The rhetoric of Department of the Interior's annual reports on these natural and cultural changes resonates with the central themes of the Enlightenment recovery narrative. Rocky Mountains Park superintendents insist in the reports that they have reclaimed human dominion over the wilderness, have succeeded in balancing unruly nature, and laud the area as a kind of second Eden. Such is the vigilance of wardens and administrators, one superintendent wrote, that "[t]here is not in all the mountains a single dangerous animal, reptile or poisonous insect; one may sleep in perfect security and safety under his blankets anywhere."[188] The animals and "ornamental trees" were also perfectly safe within Banff's sanctuary, protected from destruction by Stoneys or others by park staff. At ease in the security of their person, visitors to the park were free to enjoy the sacred place created by active human intervention in the natural world. The *Annual Report* for 1907-1908 put it thus:

> The National parks are not only withdrawn from sale or entry like the forest reservations, but they are efficiently guarded and managed by officers appointed by the Dominion government under careful supervision. Under their care the forests are flourishing, protected from both axe and fire; and so of course are the smaller shaggy underbrush on the mountain sides and the herbaceous growth of the lower valleys. The furred and feathered tribes, which a few years ago were in danger of extinction, are increasing. Besides these the parks are the homes of a number of larger game, such as the buffalo, elk, moose, bear and many others, which here,

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[187] Howard Angus Kennedy, *New Canada and the New Canadians* (London and Toronto: Musson, 1907), 130.

[188] Howard Douglas, "Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI,* 1900-01, Part IV, 6.

> under the efficient protection provided, feel secure and at home and are also rapidly increasing.[189]

The purpose of such all these forms of nature management in the Banff area was, as Mabel Williams put it in a particularly telling phrase, to "make some of 'the wild places of the land sacred.'"[190] Sacred places, Williams asserts, are *made*; the human reshaping of the natural world within the parks is envisioned here as a necessity in developing the "shrines of the earth."[191] There is perhaps no more succinct statement of the power of the ideology of man infinite in the establishment and development of the early parks. The Canadian government is here represented as the agency by which a wilderness ravaged by offences both human and natural is brought to its consummation. creation is restored, nature made whole.

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[189] Howard Douglas, "Report of the Superintendent of Rocky Mountains Park," *ARDI*, 1907-08, Part V, 4.

[190] Williams, *Jasper National Park*, 1.

[191] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, 51.

Chapter 5: Romantic Visions of Banff

Romanticism and Canada's National Parks

Between 1885 and 1930, natural romanticism was a central discourse in English-Canadian culture. Patricia Jasen provides a succinct summary of the general features of this sensibility: "... romanticism refers to the tendency, widespread among members of the middle and upper classes by the end of the eighteenth century, to value feeling and imagination, or sensibility, far more than before, to extend or transfer feelings formerly associated with religious experience to the secular realm, and to imbue 'wild nature' with new meaning and value."[192] The contrast between utilitarian and romantic perspectives upon nature is clear: whereas the former employed reason to probe and transform the material world in the service of human projects, the latter revelled in an emotional, personal engagement with an enchanted creation of profound, innate value in its untamed, unhumanized form. The growth of natural romanticism in late nineteenth-century Canada was inescapably linked to the colonization of nature through industrialization and the alienation from nature associated with urbanization–two social changes commonly viewed as integral to modernity. These social and economic shifts that removed an increasing number of Canadians from daily and intimate contact with the natural world precipitated profound anxieties among Victorian English-Canadians. Public intellectuals, poets, and others lamented the physical and spiritual squalor of city life, the spiritual degeneration that seemed to accompany material progress, the diminishment of "manly virtues" among the emergent professional and bureaucratic class, and the twin demons of ennui and stress of life in a prosaic, disenchanted world. During the Laurier years, these thinkers challenged the scientific, utilitarian vision of nature and society in post-Confederation Canada and hailed wilderness experiences as a necessary corrective to the diseases of the metropolis:

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[192] Jasen, 7.

> Indeed, as a reaction against certain distressing tendencies in their society, many Canadians wanted to get "back to nature," to better manage her resources and to use her as an instrument of religious expression. ... This positive perception involved the ideas of Nature as a Benevolent Mother capable of soothing city-worn nerves and restoring health, of rejuvenating a physically deteriorating race and of teaching lessons no book learning could give; as a Limited Storehouse whose treasures must in the future be treated with greater respect; and as a Temple where one could again find and communicate with Deity.[193]

These impulses were embodied in English Canada in varied and sundry ways. The fictional works and verses of authors like Ralph Connor, William Fraser, Robert Service, and the Confederation poets all reflected the idea of Nature as a Benevolent Mother, a source of physical and moral restoration, as did the growth of the mind-cure movement in Canada, the Canada First movement's assertion of a hardy northern identity rooted in nature, and the rise of cottaging culture and the nature holiday. The creation of the Conservation Commission in 1909 and the rise of grassroots organizations like the Canadian National Parks Association dedicated to safeguarding Canada's natural resources testify to the growing strength of the notion of Nature as a Limited Storehouse. The religious vision of nature as a Temple was perhaps most fully manifest in the works of artists like Lawren Harris (1885-1970), a Theosophist who viewed creation as a medium for ascending to the essential truths of the cosmos. Nationalism often infused these varied forms of perceiving nature, and shaped ideas of creation as a definitive source of the Canadian moral and social identity, an enviable and precious resource for the nation's economic progress, and a medium for communication with the divine. These intellectual currents deeply shaped conceptions of Banff between 1885 and 1930 and offered a complex, often deeply ambiguous, challenge to the utilitarian and profoundly anthropocentric vision of Banff as a constellation of natural resources to be developed and exploited.

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[193] George Altmeyer, "Three Ideas of Nature in Canada, 1893-1914," in *Consuming Canada*, 97-98.

Nature as a Temple: Romanticism, Religion and the anti-Modernist Critique

The most radical critique of the utilitarian vision of Banff articulated by many scientists, politicians, and administrators was expressed by romantic tourists and artists who perceived the region's natural world as a dwelling place of the divine. The idea of nature as a temple was manifest in varied and sundry ways. Authors of some accounts directly challenged the deeply anthropocentric vision of nature associated with utilitarianism by describing nature as an overwhelming reality, irreducible to mathematical renderings, inscrutable to the limited minds of mortals. This sensibility, an intriguing example of the channelling of ideas and experiences formerly associated with Christian religious culture into more secular courses, was expressed through often extravagant paeans to the majesty and power of the created world. It was also communicated through articulations of inarticulateness, with writers commenting upon the sheer incomprehensibility of creation's essence and an artist like Lawren Harris resorting to ever-greater abstraction in order to lift the veil of matter and perceive the spirit at the heart of nature. The religious conception of Banff informed a particular understanding of the proper relationship between humanity and nature. Park promotional materials encouraged visitors to cultivate a profoundly personal relationship with the sublime beauties of the Banff area. Tourist accounts manifest the desire for an intimate, sentimental bond between divine nature and her devotees. For some, the connection between Canadians and their spiritually-infused natural environment lay at the heart of the dominion's cultural identity. Through their assertion of the majesty of nature and the feebleness of humanity, their belief in cultivating an “I-Thou”–as opposed to an “I-It”–relationship with nature, and their articulation of a kind of highly spiritual romantic nationalism, authors of park promotional materials and tourists sought to contest the utilitarian conception of creation and its relationship to humanity.

Anxieties about the implications of the utilitarian, progressive vision and its materialist, this-worldly implications on the life of the spirit were manifest by the mid-nineteenth century. In 1853, at roughly the same time that scientific culture and the ideology of progress were beginning to lay their claim on Canadian consciousness, philosopher James George (1801-1870) presented an address at the opening of Queen’s College in which he reflected on the diminishment of the religious culture in English-Canada:

> ... the error, or rather the atheism of our times is to look to nature, or the successful triumphs of physical science over nature, for all that man needs to make him happy. You will require to study this well to be able to see the relation in which man must stand to GOD in order to be in harmony with the laws of nature, so that modern inventions shall minister to his good.[194]

The growing power of utilitarianism and its associated ideology of progress, along with the significant challenges posed to traditional religious understanding by such developments as historical criticism of the Bible, was, in the late nineteenth century, eroding some English-Canadians’ commitment to the intellectual foundations of Christianity. Social changes associated with modernization also undercut traditional religious life in Canada. David Marshall points out that

> [b]y the 1890s churchmen had become conscious of the fact that Canadian society was increasingly pluralistic and secular. There were organized and competitive sports, recreational sports such as cycling, amusement parks, Mechanics’ Institutes, trade unions, social clubs, political organizations, libraries, theatre, and music-halls, which could assume some of the functions that the church and religion traditionally

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[194] James George, *An Address delivered at the Opening of Queen's College, 1853* (Kingston, 1853) 22; qtd in McKillop, 42-43.

> held. Moreover, these institutions and activities competed directly with religion and the churches for the attention of the masses.[195]

By the end of the nineteenth century, mainstream Protestant churches in English Canada had largely abandoned the internecine conflicts that had defined their relations in the early nineteenth century in order to confront the secular ideology of progress, an alternate moral source that seemed to value the earthly over the heavenly, human effort over divine dispensation, material prosperity over spiritual piety.

Between the 1880s and the 1920s, natural romanticism or what Charles Taylor calls "the Voice of Nature" grew increasingly important in Canada as a challenge to the growing power of utilitarianism. Like the ecumenical Protestants of this period so disturbed by what George had earlier called the advancing "atheism of our times," English-Canadian natural romantics during these decades launched a trenchant critique of what they perceived as the anthropocentric and existentially

meaningless thrust of scientific, materialist secularity. Although often differing in their metaphysical assumptions, natural romanticism and ecumenical Protestantism were united in their deep regard for a transhuman reality that underlay and imparted meaning to human life. Both believed this reality to be imminent. For natural romantics, it was manifest in creation; for evangelical Protestants, in the ever-presence of Christ. The tension between the deeply anthropocentric utilitarian conception of the world, on the one hand, and the religious and romantic, on the other, is well expressed by Leszek Kolakowski:

> The conflict is cultural, and it is about our hierarchy of preferences: our *libido dominandi* against our need to find meaning in the universe and in our lives. Both desires, *libido dominandi* and the search for meaning, are rooted inalienably in the very act of being human, but they limit each other instead of coexisting peacefully.[196]

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[195] David B. Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 127.

[196] Kolakowski, 99.

Central to the search for meaning in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English Canada was the quest for some transhuman source, a metaphysical reality that could satisfy the longing for a purpose in individual and social life. Whereas for early nineteenth-century English Canadians, this impulse had been almost universally channelled into the ideas and practices of the various Protestant denominations, by the Late Victorian period, the Christian faith no longer commanded such a near monopoly on the language of meaning. In the literature of the parks, romantic naturalism articulated a vision of a transhuman moral source capable of defining and fulfilling the longings of the individual soul. It thus represented an effort to reclaim from the ideology of man infinite some sense of the metaphysical, to keep alive in a rational world something of the mysterious.

The Enchanted World of Banff

By the turn into the twentieth century, writing about parks, both what the Dominion Parks Branch produced and what was written by other agencies and by individuals, frequently expressed the idea of nature as a powerful, transhuman moral source. Many visitors to the park rejected the anthropocentric notion that man was the measure, arguing instead that the wilderness in and around Banff testified, not to the power of human scientific and technological power, but rather to the insignificance of individuals, even of society, in the face of the awesome and eternal realities of Nature. As one author put it,

> [y]ou begin to feel the unmitigated vastness of it all very soon after you come into the enchanted area of eternal steadfastness. The unalterable immobility and repose of it; the consciousness that no march of science or feat of puny man can ever by any possibility change it; that it will remain until the next cosmic cataclysm just as it is now; that it can never be "utilized," even by the most pushing and purposeful of stock companies, consequently that it is an inheritance for mankind till mankind is wiped off the earth–these are some of the ideas that come into one's head when the

> train stops at a wayside station and you look up through the fresh, cool mountain air to the summits of the great peaks.[197]

The same author notes that the common alpinist quest for first ascents and the naming rights for mountains "seems utterly ridiculous .... In truth, Alpine climbers and engineers and geologists should be restrained. So should astronomers. It was all very well to name planets after the good old mythological deities, but they are actually calling stars after Dick, Tom and Harry, which is surely the *ne plus ultra* of commonplace vulgarity."[198] The CPR echoed this sensibility in a 1912 promotional pamphlet that promised that visitors to Banff would be "impressed as never before with the mightiness of nature, and the feebleness and fleetingness of humanity."[199] This sensibility, traceable to the sublime aesthetic of mountains as awesome, humbling, even overpowering, was not uncommon in the literature of Banff. In some works, this form of apprehension was married to a recognizably Christian theological vision. In a promotional piece published by the local Banff newspaper, for instance, the mountains are described as divine creations in florid prose evoking all the categories of premodern religious experiences–fascination, awe, dread, and humility in the face of the divine:

> But what language could convey to mind the grey granite-like metropolis of smokeless mountains, the boundless scene filled with the streets and towering mansions of the clear city of God. Oh, the unutterable silence and majesty, the delight, the loneliness, and the dread! Surely the Most High is not the human-like being of the kindergarten thought, but the infinite, who fills yet transcends heaven and earth. Terraces and crescents all around, ranges near and ranges behind ranges far away. Peaks stretching out as if in skirmishing order, peaks lining up to peaks in imposing display, and peaks compact, crowded, in solid phalanx, peaks

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[197] Bernard McEvoy, *From the Great Lakes to the Wide West: Impressions of a Tour Between Toronto and the Pacific* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1902), 119.

[198] Ibid., 124.

[199] Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *Resorts in the Canadian Rockies: Carriage Drives, Walking and Camping Trips, Camping and Saddle Horse Trips, Tariffs and General Information* (Montreal [?]: s.n., 1912 [?]), 4.

> predominating countless. What an army of mountain peaks. What a marshalling of the hosts of God![200]

In these passages, the relative proportions of humanity and nature are returned to their premodern state, with the mountains standing eternal and unconquerable and the individual human nakedly revealed as mortal and impotent.

Apprehending the metaphysical in the Banff area was presented by both park promoters and romantic tourists as a profound experience. The divine presence that romantics sought to encounter in the park was envisioned as a mystery, an aspect of reality incapable of definition by scientific theories of Deep Time or mathematical abstractions of physical qualities; it was, in short, something sublime, a form of Being but dimly grasped by the human mind. James Carmichael, the author of a highly entertaining promotional piece for the CPR detailing his round-trip rail excursion between Montreal and Victoria in the late 1880s, acknowledged the theory of Deep Time in creating the Rockies by referencing geological periods, but felt compelled to associate the mountains' creation with elemental beings not unlike Thompson's primeval Creator: "... [the mountains] seemed as if some Devonian or Carboniferous giant had piled them up in a fit of wild and savage passion, and had then beaten in their faces with his giant hammer; no sloping sides or graceful peaks–nothing but chaos piled up on chaos, till lost in the early morning clouds."[201] Others, perhaps lacking Carmichael's evident ability to capture in a sensational way the awesome reality of the mountains, abandoned the effort altogether. Typical in writing about the Rockies near Banff was the idea that "... descriptions [of the mountains] are all far short of the reality."[202] Some accounts even criticized that most essential equipage of the Canadian tourist–the camera–as inadequate to the task of capturing the awesome presence of the mountains: "To those who have seen the mountains, photographs reproduce to a faint extent their vivid impressions, but, somehow, they do not give you the far-away grandeur, the sublime height and distance, the elusive dream-like splendour of the reality."[203] These kinds of sentiments, while undoubtedly useful to the interests of the CPR and the Canadian government, also reflected the idea that the mountains around Banff possessed an auratic presence that could not be captured in writing or by the camera; that the scientific theories and photographic technologies that had rendered the mountains into resource inventories and geographic abstractions had somehow missed their awesome, metaphysical Being.

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[200] *Guide to the Canadian National Park at Banff and the Yoho Valley: Interesting Descriptions Through the Park, with Indian Legends* (Banff: Crag and Canyon, [1903?]), 12-14.

[201] James Carmichael, *A Holiday Trip: Montreal to Victoria and Return Via the Canadian Pacific Railway, Midsummer 1888* (Montreal: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1888), 15.

The vision of Banff as a vividly divine place only dimly comprehended by the human mind achieved perhaps its greatest expression in the art of Lawren Harris. A frequent visitor to the Banff area and devotee of the theosophist movement, Harris first visited the Rockies in 1924 and conducted almost yearly artistic pilgrimages to the mountains. He painted places in and around Banff, including the mountains as well as Moraine Lake and Lake Louise. From his early mountain paintings to his more mature renderings of the Rockies, one discerns an unmistakable trajectory towards increasing abstraction and a deeper, more ethereal apprehension of reality. The physical particularities of the mountains–their rugged form and subtle tonalities of colour–were increasingly rendered in a purified aesthetic vision of simple geometric forms described through a limited palette. This process of simplification has been well described as the "stripping-down of chaotic form into

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[202] Roderick George MacBeth, *Recent Canadian West Letters (Historical and Descriptive)* (Brantford, ON: Hurley Printing, 1912), 45.

[203] McEvoy, 120.

[paintings] of pristine elegant force."[204] In some respects, Harris's work paralleled that of his more scientifically-oriented predecessors and contemporaries, who transformed the robust corporeality of the mountains into simplified topographical lines shorn of life and colour–geometrical simulacra of the Rockies' forms. In both cases, the foundational reality of the physical world was seen to lie in secondary–as opposed to strictly primary and sensory–qualities, but whereas Wheeler and his fellow surveyors tended to view nature's secondary qualities as mathematical, discerned by the scientific intellect, and highly useful in the mapping of space, Harris perceived the abstract ground of creation as religious in nature, apprehended by mystical insight, and of an order of value distinct from the crudely utilitarian. Harris saw the physical features of the mountains as emblems of an archetypal, transcendent reality of purified forms and colours. His art represented in this respect a form of nostalgic romanticism seeking to re-create in oil the original unity and pristine beauty of a radiant world now perceived but dimly through the disfiguring organs of sensory perception. Harris understood the transcendent reality at the heart of nature to be at the core of Canadian identity. As Ann Davis points out, this was not an uncommon view among his contemporaries: "Right in Canada there was an important contemporary movement promoting the idea that Canada's unique character derived from her northern location, her severe winters, and her population of 'northern races.'"[205] Although Harris's mystical theosophist leanings placed him outside the mainstream of Protestant culture in the early twentieth century, his belief that contemplation of Banff's nature could provide a Neo-Platonic-like ascent to divine realities and the strong reception to his works reflected a growing romantic belief in Victorian Canada that the created world possessed profound metaphysical and national significance.

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[204] Joan Murray, *Canadian Art in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: Dundurn, 1999), 21.

[205] Ann Davis. *The Logic of Ecstasy: Canadian Mystical Painting 1920-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 66-67.

Banff as a Moral Source

The idea that Banff vividly manifested a metaphysical reality was inextricably interwoven with the belief that nature possessed existential meaning for, and existed in personal relation to, Canadian tourists. In significant ways, the manner in which this relationship was understood and expressed possessed an unmistakable symmetry with the ways in which English Canadians had traditionally spoken about God. The early nineteenth-century Methodist understanding of a sentimental and personal relationship with the Christian God seems to have been translated, at least in some respects, into the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century romantic naturalism and emotionalism of Banff tourists. Nature in park literature was often portrayed as a kindly provider–what George Altmeyer calls a "Benevolent Mother"–capable of physically and morally restoring humanity. This sensibility is abundantly expressed in the words of Italian mountaineer and photographer Guido Rey (1861-1935) approvingly quoted by Mabel Williams in her guidebook to the Rockies and Selkirks: "The Mountains are so kindly and so great that they reject none of those who turn to them, and they are good to all ... to the weary who flee from the heat and the turmoil of the city to refresh themselves at this pure source of physical and moral health."[206] Tourist Frank Carrel (1870-1940) offers a rather more mawkishly sentimental response to the idea of the Rocky Mountains as compassionate, even salvific: "We felt something within us, crying to us to go out and hug those dear mountains, live with them, caress them, and this would be life, the true life, such life as we had never had before."[207] For Rey (and, we may assume, Williams) as well as for Carrel, the mountains were compassion-embodied and "pure" sources of moral and physical restoration. Implicit in these accounts is the belief that nature is more than mere matter-in-motion; the created world possesses a spirit well disposed to human beings and offers an authentic source of human wholeness. One perceives here some echo of the Stoneys' faith that *Waka Taga* had created the manifold beings and forms of nature to provide for the tribe's physical and spiritual needs. For romantic visitors to the mountains, nature did indeed manifest universal laws, but those laws were not foundationally material and mechanistic, but rather spiritual, organic, and consonant with the true nature of the human person. Harkin wrote that "Nature has created these landscapes in accordance with some divine law of harmony of her own."[208] The proper approach to such a reality was not rational probity, but rather emotional affinity; the proper manner of description not bloodless and mathematical, but rather lyric and sentimentally. As one author put it, the true glory of the parks could not be "discovered except by love: to none but lovers are her secrets revealed. It is to poets and lovers of nature like Wordsworth that her secrets are made known."[209] To become attuned to the "divine law of harmony" through sympathetic identification was, for Harkin, to tap into "energies which our science has not yet studied which are as necessary to man's complete well," and to open to "potentialities ... which, if developed, could make life nobler, happier, more truly human."[210] In this vision, it is not humanity that brings nature to its consummation, but rather the reverse–nature that ennobles and fulfills the human person.

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[206] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, 1.

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[207] Frank Carrel, *Canada's West and Farther West: Latest Book on the Golden Opportunities* (Toronto: Musson Book Co., 1911), 90.

[208] Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, 13.

[209] Alfred Buckley, "Canada's National Parks," *The Canadian Magazine* 63 (1924), 210.

[210] Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, 14.

The belief that individuals could encounter in Banff the authentic and profound source of their being was naturally married to a form of romantic nationalism emergent in early twentieth-century Canada. Echoing the ideas of scholars like Carl Berger, Eric Kaufmann has recently argued that a strong impulse to "naturalize the nation," to identify national identity with nature, developed in late nineteenth-century Canada and reached its apogee in the 1920s.[211] Central to this idea was the view that Canada's majestic natural patrimony and northerly climate forged robust, morally upright citizens–a pointed contrast to both effete American southerners and urbanized, overly industrial Britons. The literature of Banff reflected this sensibility and frequently married the notion of nature as a moral source to national destiny:

> Banff is beautiful, but it is also beneficent. The Mineral Springs and Sulphur Baths are curative, and the breezes that blow over Banff have healing in their wings. The devout have called the mountains of Banff "The Hills of the Lord." And true it is that
>
> "They are nurseries for young rivers,
> Nests for the flying cloud,
> Homesteads for new-born races,
> Masterful, free and proud.
> The people of tired cities
> Come up to their shrines and pray;
> God freshens again within them,
> As He passes by all day."[212]

Harris expressed this same understanding in a declaration of the spiritual power of "the replenishing North" for the Canadian nation: "The Canadian artist serves the spirit of his land and people. He is aware of the spiritual flow from the replenishing North and believes that this ... , working in creative individuals, will give rise to an art quite different from that of any European people."[213] The belief that Europe was, though cultured, decadent and feudal had been an animating idea in North American romanticism and featured prominently in the thought of Walt Whitman (1819-1892). This same view was clearly shared by Harkin. In the *Handbook of Canada*, published in 1924, he argued that the "love of country in Canada is not based, as in older lands, upon the settled peace of the countryside .... It is a love born in the breasts of those adventurous spirits who came first and conquered the wilderness–a love of the primitive, the untamed, and the wild."[214] Harkin wrote elsewhere that in stark contrast to the Old World, where "the quantity of natural beauty ... has fallen into the hands of private persons,"[215] the sublime and uplifting powers of Canada's wild beauty were to be the provenance of all the nation's citizens, their accessibility an embodiment of "the true spirit of democracy."[216] Defending the national parks from depredation and ensuring public access were, for Harkin, based upon "every principle of enlightened patriotism."[217] In his post-war annual reports, Harkin would present the parks as a healing salve for the nation, a place where soldiers and citizens traumatized by war could rediscover wholeness. In all these romantic forms of nationalism, it is creation that imprints culture, nature that defines nation; the natural world exists not as an exploitable resource for the material progress of Canada, but rather as a spiritual wellspring for the inner health of the country.

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[211] Eric Kaufmann, "'Naturalizing the Nation': The Rise of Naturalistic Nationalism in the United States and Canada," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (1998): 666-95.

[212] *The Prince of Playgrounds: Come Home by Canada and Revel in the Rockies, Beautiful Banff* (Ottawa: s.n., 1911?), 22. These verses are taken from the poem "The Hills of the Lord," by William C. Gannett, the son of a Unitarian minister.

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[213] Lawren Harris, "Creative Art in Canada," in *The Yearbook of the Arts in Canada*, ed. Bertram Brooker (Toronto: Macmillan, 1929), 184.

[214] J. B. Harkin, "Canada's National Parks," in *Handbook of Canada*, British Association for the Advancement of Science, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1924), 96.

[215] Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, 9.

[216] Ibid., 6-7.

[217] Ibid., 15.

The romantic modality of perceiving nature manifest in literature about Banff in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries shares with some early English-Canadian visitors to the Rockies the sense of the mountains as places vividly expressing a transhuman reality. But certain striking differences are evident. In the early nineteenth century, nature had served religious purposes in English Canada either as a stage for divine encounter–as was the case with Methodist wilderness revivals–or as an image of the awesome power of the Christian God. David Thompson and Robert Rundle certainly viewed the mountains as vehicles for contemplating the omnipotence and wrath of the Christian God. By the Late Victorian period, nature had gained credible standing within English-Canadian culture as a moral source in its own right; the interpretation of nature was increasingly detached from an overarching Christian theological vision and integrated into a rather more vague romantic spirituality of uncertain relationship to mainline Protestant thought. Thus, J.B. Harkin could write of how "Nature"–and not God the Father–had created Banff's sublime beauties and tourist Frank Carrel could rhapsodize about mountains–and not Christ–as the source of "true life." Such sentiments would almost certainly have been unthinkable to most early nineteenth-century Canadians. Steeped in the deeply Christian vision that animated so much of Protestant culture in Britain and Canada during this period, men like Thompson and Rundle could not have conceived of creation without the Christian Creator, nor of salvation without Christ. Other significant differences between pre- and post-Confederation ideas of Banff's natural world exist. Both the Stoneys and men like Rundle and Southesk were appreciative of the negative aspects of nature in and around Banff. Within the Stoneys' cosmos were places marked as taboo, perilous sites inhabited by sinister spirits. Southesk viewed the mountains as places of daemonic presence, while Rundle perceived them as monuments to divine wrath. In park literature and visitor accounts, nature is portrayed as almost wholly benevolent.

Intriguingly, and perhaps unsurprisingly, these romantic forms of perceiving nature as an arena of primary metaphysical regard and a beneficent moral source arise after the wilderness of the pre-Confederation West had been tamed by scientific understanding and technological colonization. Although Mabel Williams frequently evoked the sublimity of the mountains in her guidebooks, she was clearly aware of how the Late Victorian tourist's experience of the mountains differed from that of someone like Thompson or Southesk:

> ... the final conquering of the Rockies in so short a period of time constitutes a victory over the opposing forces of Nature of which any century might well be proud. ... It seems strange that fifty years ago the Canadian Rockies were still an unknown wilderness, a tangled chaos of peaks, thrusting their terrifying barrier of four hundred miles between the prairies and the sea.[218]

In the wake of this scientific and technological conquest, the "tangled chaos of peaks" had been domesticated: "Nowhere else, they will tell you, can a man feel so at home with the mountains. Here the great peaks do not threaten or oppress a man with the sense of his own littleness. There is something about the very atmosphere that is friendly and benign."[219] This pattern, in which the awe-inspiring and terrifying reality of the mountains was rendered benignly pleasurable–in which, that is, the sublime became the picturesque and the apprehension of nature moved from primarily religious to primarily aesthetic and romantic–recurred on the West Coast, as well. Writing of perceptions of British Columbia's natural world, Maria Tippett and Douglas Cole note that by the turn of the century, "[t]he grandeur that had become part of the consciousness of Europeans in the eighteenth century as an awesome and terrifying feeling, the magnificence that had been rhetorically clichéd and moralized by the mid-Victorians, had now been tamed to poetic, even pedestrian, proportions. To the central Canadian and immigrant Englishman, the mountains were merely an intriguing landscape novelty."[220] The rhetoric of the sublime continued to be employed–consider the above quoted "Oh, the unutterable silence and majesty, the delight, the loneliness, and the dread!"–but in the highly developed environs of Banff, it seemed increasingly like a formal trope, rather than a lived experience. The romantic tourist vision thus took root and became widespread in Banff precisely–and ironically–because of the colonization of nature effected through rational human understanding and technology.

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[218] Mabel B. Williams, *Kootenay National Park and the Banff Windermere Highway* (Ottawa: F.A. Acland, 1929), 8.

[219] Williams, *Jasper National Park: A Descriptive Guide* (Hamilton, H.R. Larson publishing co. 1949), 2.

This tension between the poles of this binary system–utilitarian political logic, on the one hand, and the romantic tourist vision, on the other–seems to have been reconciled in the idea of natural beauty as a consumable product. As John Wadland puts it, "[a]lthough modern Canadians tend to consider wilderness and culture antithetical notions, as consumers they unite in identifying both with their leisure time–with their recreation."[221] Thus, the seeming contradictions between the celebration of the wild and the developed, the savage and the civilized, are resolved by binding these threads together in a modern consumptive package. In order to make this package palatable to Victorian English-Canadians, the "wildness" and "savagery" of undomesticated, "premodern" nature required taming. Thus the Stoneys' profound existential encounter with the awfulness and majesty of the mountains is rendered safe and predictable by the remaking of human and natural worlds in the interest of romantic consumption. Mabel Williams concisely states the consumptive ethos that informed the creation and consumption of Banff: "Perhaps one of the reasons why so many people love Banff is because they find there such a number of things to interest and amuse. Banff has an infinite variety of attractions and she knows how to please each of her lovers in his own way."[222] Banff offered all the consumers of the region's beauty–whether scientist, mystic, climber, aesthete, or motorist–whatever they might desire. In satisfying the romantic yearnings of park visitors, of course, Banff helped to recoup the federal treasury, and, thereby, fulfill dimensions of both the utilitarian and the romantic ideals.

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[220] Maria Tippett and Douglas Cole, *From Desolation to Splendour: Changing Perceptions of the British Columbia Landscape* (Toronto: Clark, Irwin, 1977), 49.

[221] Wadland, 12.

An Anti-City, A Mind-Cure

Natural romanticism shaped ideas of the Rocky Mountains Park as a sanctuary of the lush, the pure, and the invigorating, set aside for citizens of colourless, grimy, and soulless cities. Between 1885 and 1919, as Mariana Valverde has persuasively argued, the rise of urban living as the normative mode of Canadian existence prompted grave anxieties.[223] Layered with conceptions of gender, race, and class, these concerns often coalesced into stated public fears about cities as locuses of sin. Reformers mobilized the forces of both the state and the churches in an effort to spread the Social Gospel and snuff out the alcoholism, prostitution, and general criminality of the metropolitan world. These campaigns frequently targeted immigrants and the economic underclass, but upstanding middle- and upper-class people were also concerned about the effects of urban life on the physical vigour and mental health of their social strata. Archibald Lampman (1861-1899) prophetically condemns the modern city as a nightmarishly inhuman second Babel, in his apocalyptically dark poem, "The City of the End of Things," a poem that ranks as perhaps the Victorian period's most fully realized expression of anxieties about urban life in English-Canada:

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[222] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, 16.

[223] Mariana Valverde. *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991).

> ...
> Through its grim depths re-echoing
> And all its weary height of walls,
> With measured roar and iron ring,
> The inhuman music lifts and falls.
> Where no thing rests and no man is,
> And only fire and night hold sway;
> The beat, the thunder and the hiss
> Cease not, and change not, night nor day.
> And moving at unheard commands,
> The abysses and vast fires between,
> Flit figures that with clanking hands
> Obey a hideous routine;
> They are not flesh, they are not bone,
> They see not with the human eye,
> And from their iron lips is blown
> A dreadful and monotonous cry;
> And whoso of our mortal race
> Should find that city unaware,
> Lean Death would smite him face to face,
> And blanch him with its venomed air:
> Or caught by the terrific spell,
> Each thread of memory snapt and cut,
> His soul would shrivel and its shell
> Go rattling like an empty nut ... .

In Lampman's poem, the mechanistic models that had increasingly defined nature and society infect the human, rendering flesh into machine and the community of men into the interchangeable, indistinguishable cogs of some bleak factory's innards. The city of the end of things belies the "optimism inherent in Victorian progressive, expansionist, materialistic thought." It substitutes instead a "nightmare of irresistible regress." For critic Bruce L. Grenberg, the dark paradox at the heart of this poem lies in the birth of this "dreadful city of night" from "the light of humanity's highest aspirations and, indeed, faith," in science and human capacity.[224] The city was thus a kind of anti-place that was mechanical, impersonal, and impure.

Promotional material for Banff often tapped into the idea that the city was a dystopia, a soulless place of enervation, anxiety, and the half-lived life, and that the park represented a sanctuary for the suffering masses of the cities. The CPR touted Banff as a tonic far removed from industrial economy and the "factories full of grime and dirt [that] pollute the atmosphere."[225] Mabel Williams, in her guidebook to Waterton Lakes National Park, wrote caustically of the depredations of life in a "mechanical and material civilization."[226] The machines and factories of the modernizing Canadian economy were painted in bleak, Dickensian tones; the urban accounting firms and private enterprises that served industry were portrayed equally dismally, as locuses for the "the anxiety and haste of commercial life … ."[227] The city was frequently represented in park promotional materials and visitor accounts as devoid of the pristine organic enchantments of nature. The city was represented as grimy, inhuman, and stressful; the natural world of the park was portrayed as pure, restorative, and conducive to the patient contemplation of life's meaning. Tourists who fled to Banff were presented as "lovers of life in the open … insurgents against sluggish existence, against wasting the bright sunshine of the world, against remaining indoors."[228] Williams conjoined the belief in Banff as enchanted and restorative realm with a trenchant critique of the alternating ennui and frenzy of the urban world. Using language redolent with traditional Christian ideas, though with a new, romantic emphasis upon nature's place in the divine economy, she compared the journey from the city to the mountains to another famous pilgrim's voyage:

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[224] Bruce L. Grenberg, "'The City of the End of Things': The Significance of Lampman's Sound and Fury," in *Inside the Poem*, ed. W.H. New (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992), 125-26.

[225] Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *The Canadian Rockies*, 21.

[226] Mabel B. Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park* (Ottawa: National Parks Branch, 1927), 5.

[227] Maclean, 191.

[228] Barney W. Collison, *Banff Canadian National Park in Winter: Canada's Winter Playground* (Banff: s.n., 1920), 34.

> The sordid cares and anxieties brought from an outside competitive world drop away like Christian's burden at the sight of the Delectable Mountains. One gives himself up to the spirit of the place realizing that after all "living, not getting a living" is the true end of life.[229]

Her works were filled with similar encomiums on a wild, primeval Nature far removed from urban realities. Nature was presented as the repository of the cardinal virtues necessary for salvation from the "Seven Devils of our modern life–the little demons of Fear, Worry, Over-Haste, and Over-work, Indigestion, Unrest, and Abysmal Boredom."[230] In Williams's guidebooks, nature is a primeval presence capable of saving us from the endless getting and spending, the soul-numbing rationalism, that constituted metropolitan malaise in the modern, industrial cities of Canada.

The idea of Banff as a kind of anti-city, a sanctuary from urbanity, was embodied in the manifest influence of the mind-cure movement among park promoters and visitors. Patricia Jasen points out that, "[t]he growth of Canadian cities coincided with a greater tolerance for the notion of legitimate recreation, conveniently justified by growing fears about the effects of overwork and 'overcivilization' on personal and racial health .... Beyond doubt, men and women of the late nineteenth century understood that nerves were the preoccupation of the age."[231] These fears inspired the development of the mind-cure movement, which originated in the American northeast and sought to remedy the terrible symptoms of "neurasthenia" or "Americanitis," a nervous condition of which "modern civilization" was the "predisposing cause." The invigorating climate and vast wilderness found north of the border were touted as panaceas for the enervations of urban living. The movement influenced the Confederation poets, shaping the verse of Lampman and Bliss Carman (1861-1929), as well as the animal stories and tourist guides produced by Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943): "almost from the outset Nature was conceived as therapeutic by the poets of the Confederation group ... much of their work from the mid-1880s onwards turns on the therapeutic effects of natural scenery."[232] This sensibility, for D. M. R. Bentley, was hardly surprising, given the powerful influence of natural romanticism and the mind-cure in late nineteenth-century America, and the filtration of the ideas associated with these movements into Canada.

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[229] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, 16.

[230] Williams, *Waterton Lakes National Park*, 7.

[231] Jasen, *Wild Things*, 105, 108.

Mind-cure therapy married some of the thoroughly scientific and medical ideas of healing with creation's less quantifiable, rather more ethereal healing qualities. The central threads of the mind-cure movement are clearly evident in the promotional literature and tourist accounts of Banff. A CPR promotional piece captures the essence of the mind-cure movement:

> New surroundings, novel experiences, agreeable climate, and high altitude give an exhilarance to life and a buoyancy and a zest for enjoyment that is a tonic to the work weary, far beyond the skill of the apothecary. Nature is a wonderful physician, and her cures are many, in this wonderful playground, for not only are the mountains a splendid place for the sick and the sad, but the well also find renewed energy and a fresh inspiration that adds so much to the enjoyment of life.[233]

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[232] D. M. R. Bentley, *The Confederation Group of Canadian Poets, 1880-1897* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 178. See also Bentley's "Charles G.D. Roberts and William Wilfred Campbell as Canadian Tour Guides," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 79-99.

[233] Canadian Pacific Railway Company, *Resorts in the Canadian Rockies*, 4-5.

The enumeration of the region's natural advantages clearly participates in the ideology of "naturalizing the nation" so significant in English Canada in the 1910s and 1920s. Banff's "glorious atmosphere" was praised as easily ranking "first among the latitudes and longitudes for its dependability, equality and for all those hygienic qualities that build up great structures of brain, brawn and indomitable character."[234] The Banff Sanatorium's promotional leaflet itemized the elements of this "glorious atmosphere": "The lightness of the air, its extreme purity and dryness, the almost entire absence of clouds, the long periods of brilliant sunny days, with wonderful uniformity of solar radiation ... ."[235] These features were presented as pointed contrasts to "the hot and dusty everyday world of cities." [236] But, although the mind-cure movement occasionally touted the salubrious effects of nature's physical features on the bodily ills of urban dwellers, it was more typically focused upon the psychological effects of weary urbanites' exposure to nature. Harkin captures some sense of this when he writes of his belief that from the mountains there are "emanations ... intangible but very real, which elevate the mind and purify the spirit."[237] For devotees of the mind-cure movement, Banff was understood through a form of romanticism that perceived nature as the remedy for the evils of the city, a place in which urbanites could be renewed by contact with the glorious climatic conditions and intangible spiritual qualities of the park.

The polarity between city and nature and the influence of the mind-cure movement was reflected in the particular forms of nature perception expressed by park visitors. Whereas for many surveyors, scientists, politicians, and profiteers, the natural world of Banff had been most truly understood through the abstract language of mathematics–particularly the numerical logic of profit and loss–the tourist's conception of Banff envisioned it as inherently valuable, organic and intensely sensual. For Banff's romantic visitors, nature was not to be experienced as mere matter-in-motion, a constellation of potential resources to be rendered into secondary characteristics, tallied, tamed, and taken advantage of, but rather encountered as a field of sensory delight to be relished. The reassertion of the richness and diversity of the sensual world was everywhere apparent in the promotional literature and visitor accounts. Frequently, apprehending nature in a distinctly aesthetic manner, visitors made reference to the remarkable array of colours and shifting tonalities of light in the park:

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[234] Collison, 32.

[235] *Banff Sanitarium, Banff, N.W.T* (Banff? The Sanatorium?, 189-?).

[236] A.P. Coleman, *Glaciers of the Rockies and Selkirks* (Ottawa: Department of the Interior, 1921), 3.

[237] J.B. Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, 13-14.

> Never shall I forget the views that greeted me as I looked out of the hotel window at six o'clock on the morning we left Laggan. ... The pure white of the mountaintops, and the snow as it lay on those towering peaks, was a dazzling splendour, touched and softened by half a dozen varying rose-tints, the reflection of the glorious sun; meanwhile the glowing crags and the illuminated glacier are themselves mirrored in the placid bosom of the lake. We had each and all turned our cameras half a dozen times in the direction of Lake Louise, from different points and in different lights, but all with one accord took one snapshot more at that vision of loveliness.[238]

Others revelled in the fragrance of the air and the bracing touch of the glacial waters: "Not only has Banff been favored with a picturesque and health inspiring site, but with an atmosphere pure and balmy, filled with the fragrance of pine and balsam, with the purest crystal water as cold as the icy snows of the mountains can make it ... ."[239] One visitor listened attentively to the slow sweep of the Bow River and heard "a crowded procession of pilgrims returning from the wondrous region and talking about what they had seen. There were the voices of old and young, of gentle and simple, the prophetic and prosaic, the roar of the undistinguished voices of the multitude."[240] Implicit in these descriptions of nature's sensual particularities is a self-consciously contemplative posture towards nature that is expressed as being far removed from the aggressive probings of the scientist or the craven materialism of the entrepreneur. The authors of these passages present themselves as engaged in a kind of prayer or focused attention upon an object of innate value. This assertion of the contemplative awareness of the sensuous, a form of experience envisioned as arising naturally in response to the slow rhythms and vital corporeality of Banff's natural world, was articulated as a challenge to what was seen as the "anxiety and haste of commercial life," a way of being in the world deeply informed by abstraction and shaped by the relentless, stressful, and artificial cycles of the clock.

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[238] Grange, 76-77.

[239] Carrel, 88-89.

Cultural Nostalgia in Banff

Just as the idea of the Banff area as a sensual and organic realm contrasted with the utilitarian's apprehension of nature as mathematical and mechanical, so too romantic nostalgia about the region's wilderness contested the utilitarian faith in progress. Romanticism has often been rooted in a nostalgia for a time in which human beings were more psychologically whole and spiritually connected with their world. If utilitarianism cultivated a future-oriented rationalism that sought to reclaim human control over nature, then romanticism encouraged an often wistful backward-looking perspective that valorized the intimate communion of humanity, nature, and spirit before the corrupting influences and artifices of society fractured the integrity of the human person. P. van Tiegham argues that modern European romanticism took root in a deep disillusionment with the character of modern life: "There are basically three elements in the new state of mind, sporadically exemplified already by certain pre-romantic writers and becoming more general by the turn of the century: dissatisfaction with the contemporary world, restless anxiety in the face of life, and sadness without cause."[241] Unsurprisingly, a form of nostalgia for historical and cultural antecedents has been an abiding feature of romanticism. For Rousseau (1712-1778), commonly considered the father of modern European romanticism, the past was a storehouse of ideas and ideals, from the natural liberty of the noble savage to the stoic virility of the Romans and Spartans. The closer to the state of nature, for Rousseau, the closer to the wellsprings of human life. As Peter Gay points out, Rousseau and the *philosophes* "appealed to nature as a judgment on civilization."[242] During the full flowering of romanticism in English poetry, the same sensibility is evident: "It was standard procedure in Wordsworth's day, when characterizing poetry, to refer to its conjectured origin in the passionate, and therefore naturally rhythmical and figurative, outcries of primitive men."[243] Both the philosophical valorization of premodern societies and the poetic emulation of primitive cadences testify to a common romantic posture that perceived Enlightenment progress as regress and hailed nature and those cultures closest to it as moral sources. Whereas utilitarianism saw nature as a dominion to be claimed and conquered, romanticism perceived it as a moral source to be discerned and heeded. For those dissatisfied with the emerging realities of a modern, industrial, and bureaucratic culture, nature offered a vision of premodernity, authenticity, and freedom.

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[240] McEvoy, 114.

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[241] P. van Tiegham, "The Romantic Soul", *The Romantic Movement*, ed. A. K. Thorlby (London: Longmans Green, 1966), 22.

[242] Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Science of Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), 95.

[243] M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 78.

Promotional literature for Banff and visitor accounts tapped into this nostalgic romanticism. Both tended to present a world in which the experiences and activities of individuals were understood as more genuine than the slow, grinding *anomie* associated with urban life. Canada's natural romantics cast their gazes back to the days of heroic explorers, daring fur traders, and even the noble savages to provide themselves with models of lives less enervating, more virile, and more attuned to the divine source of human existence than the figures of the industrial labourer, the bureaucrat, or the urban professional. But much park literature was actually more radical; it presented opportunities to experience nature in Banff as an immersion in the primeval and pre-cultural. This literature represents the park as offering the promise of the kind of cosmogonic experience of the Stoneys in the Sun dance–a profound renewal of individual and society brought about through intimate contact with the very source of Being. In both visions, the nation is "naturalized"; creation becomes a forge for crafting individual moral character and a moral source for the collective soul of Canada.

Much of the promotional materials and tourist literature about the Rocky Mountains that was produced between 1885 and 1930 evinces a powerful romantic nostalgia, evoking earlier historical stages of the human experience of nature as edifying contrasts to the constraints of modern Canadian metropolitan realities. Mabel Williams provides one of the most striking statements of this nostalgia in her guidebook for Jasper. In it she implicitly laments the tepidness of ambition and achievement among her contemporaries: "These pages [of early travellers' journals], written by weary men, by the dim light of a wilderness campfire, form some of the most fascinating volumes of Canadian literature, and paint for a less heroic generation, a vivid picture of those early days."[244] The notion that early twentieth-century Canadians constituted a "less heroic" generation than men like Rundle and Simpson was a matter of considerable concern during the period in which Williams was writing, and reflected an anxiety within the nation that modern men had been emasculated by what Patricia Jasen calls "the effects of overwork and 'overcivilization' on personal and racial health."[245] Thus, to preserve the wilderness was to preserve the moral challenges of nature so vital to the building up of the kind of strong, hearty northern nation championed by members of the Canada First movement and other turn-of-the-century nationalists. Writing in the *Canadian Geographical Journal* about the national parks, Henriette Wilson put it thus: "it is essential that something of the past should be left, some spots to show succeeding generations what the country was like that their fathers adventured into and some real playgrounds for the more daring."[246] Harkin echoed this sentiment: "Let our mountain parks, at least, continue to offer a challenge to hardihood and courage."[247] The romantic nationalists who promoted and consumed Banff and its sister parks viewed the unique physical challenges of mountaineering, hunting, and other "manly" endeavours as essential counterbalances to the plodding and physically indolent character of city life. Significantly, the English-Canadian understanding of the relationship between the human and natural worlds in this vision was, like that of scientists and politicians, basically adversarial; it envisioned the inner life of the former being morally improved by an external struggle with the latter.

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[244] M.B. Williams, *Jasper National Park*, 2.

While this strain of romantic nationalism typically valorized the Anglo-Saxon heroes of the Canadian national story, it also held up Natives as models of premodern virtues.

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[245] Jasen, 105.

[246] Henrietta Wilson, "Memories of the Mountains," *Canadian Geographical Journal* 1 (1930): 207.

[247] J.B. Harkin, *The History and Meaning of the National Parks of Canada*, 12-13.

Given the tendency of both promotional materials and visitor accounts to present Banff as a place in which tourists could enter into spiritual relationship with creation, it is perhaps unsurprising that the sacred cosmos of North American Natives was occasionally identified as a model of right relations between humanity and nature. Nowhere was this inclination so eloquently expressed as in Harkin's narration of the Indian legend of Ah-ka-noosta in his preface to Mabel Williams's *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks* (1921):

> Each spring he would disappear from the tribe, returning in the autumn with renewed vigour as if he had recovered the spirit of his youth. At last his brothers, wondering, begged him to tell what secret magic he had discovered. Ah-ka-noosta, however, declared he had no magic; he had only been away in the mountains, living like the wild goat and the eagle among the peaks, sleeping in the tepee of the pine forest and drinking the clear waters of the mountain springs .... a legend grew up among them [his brothers] that Ah-ka-noosta had discovered in the mountains a magic lake whose waters were the Elixir of Life.[248]

Harkin articulated the philosophical meaning of this legend for Canada's parks:

> They [national parks] exist in order that every citizen of Canada may satisfy his soul-craving for Nature and Nature's beauty; that he may absorb the poise and restfulness of the forests; that he may steep his soul in the brilliance of the wild flowers and the sublimity of the mountain peaks; that he may develop in himself the buoyancy, the joy, and the activity he sees in the wild animals; that he may stock his brain and his mind as he would a warehouse with the raw materials of intelligent optimism, great thoughts, noble ideals; that he may be made better, happier, and healthier.[249]

Ah-ka-Noosta's nature is portrayed as a temple in which to commune with living creation and restore one's physical and moral being. The emphasis upon living "like the wild goat and the eagle," of sympathetic identification with animals, was common in Banff park literature, and reflected the popularity and cultural influence of the animal stories of authors like Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton (1860-1946). Indeed, one CPR promotional pamphlet lauded "Canada's National Rocky Mountain Park" as "the unchallenged domain of Ernest Thompson-Seton's [*sic*] 'Wild Animals I Have Known.'"[250] Animals within Ah-ka-Noosta's vision were not conceived of as dumb brutes, exploitable natural resources, or the property of the state, but rather as beings imbued with spirit and possessed of an innate dignity. Similarly, the flora of the park was not merely picturesque ornamentation, but a moral model of "poise and restfulness," and the mountains not objects to be conquered but forgers of personal character. Harkin's words play upon and echo, however faintly, the Stoneys' apprehension of nature as divine, and present the premodern Native relationship to creation as a model for a burgeoning modern Canada.

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[248] Williams, *Through the Heart of the Rockies and Selkirks*, foreword.

[249] Ibid., foreword.

Parks literature also exalted the premodern Native man as a model of manly virtue. Prominent in promotional literature for Banff were descriptions of the savage rituals of initiation for young braves:

> This spring was a favorite spot for the young Indian before his terrible ordeal was gone through that would entitle him to the name of warrior. There he made his medicine, sitting before the bubbling stream offering his sacrifices that he supposed would give him a strong heart to withstand the torture of the pole, thong and stick that he would hang his breasts to, to prove his worth as a follower of some noted chief.[251]

Mabel Williams encouraged park visitors to witness the Stoneys in some of this "old time glory" at Banff Indian Days, an annual event at which tribe members would dress in full Native regalia and perform in rodeos and other tourist attractions. The Native–and it was typically Native men who were featured at such events–was presented as the antithesis of the urban Canadian; he was a young man made strong through moral testing, immersed in a sacred world, and subject to the realities of a natural–and viscerally corporeal–existence. The same sense informed the lauding of Natives as model hunters and guides for English-

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[250] Canadian Pacific Railway, *Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, 1909: Souvenir* (Montreal: Canadian Pacific Railway, 1909), 16.

[251] *Guide to the Canadian National Park at Banff and the Yoho Valley*, 16.

Canadians. Hunting was often portrayed as the pinnacle of masculine endeavour, a raw existential encounter between man and beast. In the early years of the park, it was also one of the principal tourist draws, a reality reflected in the fact that, as Ted Hart notes, "*Fishing and Shooting* ultimately became the most popular piece of promotional literature ever issued by the CPR, running to more than thirty editions.[252] Those who came to Banff to hunt in its environs often hired Stoneys to serve as guides, and not uncommonly purchased the paraphernalia of Native hunters from Norman Luxton's Sign of the Goat Curio Shop in order to have an authentically "premodern" experience. Laurie Meijer-Drees points out that in the culture of Banff, "[h]unting as a sport was thought to 'improve' man, and the Indians were portrayed as great hunters."[253] The idea of the parks as places that preserved both previous stages of culture–whether English-Canadian or Native–*and* the natural world that had morally tested those cultures reflected a transitional moment in Canadian public life in which many were questioning the Modernist insistence upon the inexorable law of progress.

But the nostalgic celebration of the Stoneys and, more generally, the Canadian Native population was riddled with contradictions. The displays of "old time glory" at Banff Indian Days that Williams rhapsodized, including the painting of tepees and the slaughtering of buffalo, bore little relation to either the contemporary or, in many instances, the historical realities of the Stoneys' culture. The painting of tepees had been a break from the Stoney traditions designed to cater to tourists' aesthetic sensibilities, and the slaughtered buffalo meat was rarely eaten, being exchanged for beef with park officials in the days following the event.[254] Like the once noble buffalo safely penned in the park's corral or the innumerable wild animals fast frozen in the specimen cases of the Museum of Natural History, the ostensibly "wild" and "primitive" Native was cloaked with the now safely colonized aura of a wild past:

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[252] E.J. Hart, *The Selling of Canada: The CPR and the Beginnings of Canadian Tourism* (Banff: Altitude, 1983), 27.

[253] Laurie Meijer-Drees, "The Sign of the Goat," *Alberta History* 39, no. 3 (Summer 1991): 4.

> Virtually all tourists visiting the Canadian wilderness, whether European, American, or urban Canadian, saw themselves as agents of, or temporary refugees from, the civilized world. The relentless march of progress, they believed, would inevitably triumph in all parts of North America, but in the meantime they looked to the Native inhabitants to satisfy their curiosity about humanity and its wild state and to confirm their confidence in their own civilization. Regardless of whether Native people were seen as good or bad, noble or ignoble, innocent or demonic, they were cast in the role of a race in decline. Tourists might idealize or condemn them, but the belief that Native people belonged to the past and were without a future supplied a powerful, unifying theme. Confining 'Indians' to the past had a particular advantage for tourists, for it allowed them to see Native people as 'authentic' and yet ineffectual and unthreatening at the same time.[255]

Herein lies one of the great paradoxes of the parks experience–that the romantic current of much parks tourism, so often touted as a return to the wild, the primitive, in fact supported the essentially progressive vision of modern civilization.

The same nostalgia that marked sensibilities about the cultural significance of Banff defined ideas of the existential and psychological importance of the park. Just as romantic nature was married to visions of previous, more heroic generations of both English-Canadian and Native culture, so too was it joined to the ideal of childhood as a previous and far more satisfying modality of individual experience. The CPR and the Canadian government both promoted this perception of the mountain parks by lauding them as "National Playgrounds." Indeed, it seems doubtful that any other sobriquet was so frequently applied to Banff and its sister parks in the period before 1930 and that year's revised *National Parks Act*. The promotion of the parks as fertile ground for the expression of the "spirit of play" and gateway to the many delights of childhood was integrated into the binary discourse of culture and nature, work and leisure, encumbered maturity and liberated childhood, which informed so much of the literature on Banff. Tourists to the park were encouraged to sin against the late nineteenth-century cardinal virtue of industriousness and indulge in the childish irresponsibility of Canada's "paradise for loungers and loafers."[256] Abandoning the stresses and harsh utilitarian calculus of the commercial and industrial worlds for the spontaneous vitality of nature, visitors were assured, would enable them to experience anew the imaginative wonder of encountering creation through a child's eyes. One visitor wrote of how in the hot springs of Banff "the fairy tales of childhood seem to become a living reality";[257] another, in a similar vein, expressed child-like awe at the mountains: "No words, no brush, could convey an idea of that glimpse into fairyland."[258] Other park visitors conjoined this sense of childlike wonder with a slightly melancholic expression of its passing: "The two ranges [Rockies and Selkirks] tower, white-headed above their bench lands and their river reaches, facing each other across a great green gulf, mountains of another world, as aloof and ever-beautiful as one's memories of childhood."[259] The references to childhood and its associated qualities was both celebratory and elegiac. They championed the parks as a sanctuary for child-like experiences while also, often implicitly, lamenting the demise of such forms of perception from the everyday lives of urban Canadians.

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[254] Laurie Meijer Drees, "'Indians' Bygone Past:' The Banff Indian Days, 1902-1945," *Past Imperfect* 2 (1993): 13.

[255] Jasen, 17.

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[256] Bessie Pullen-Burry, *From Halifax to Vancouver* (Toronto: Bell and Cockburn, 1912), 300.

[257] Maclean, 193.

[258] Grange, 77.

[259] Betty Thornley, "A Playground of the Gods," *The Canadian Magazine* 63, no. 2 (1924): 106.

Primeval Nature and a Modern Canada

Perhaps the most striking and common form of romantic nostalgia associated with Banff sought a time prior to childhood, prior even to culture. In this vision, Banff was portrayed as a kind of cosmogonic window, offering visitors the opportunity to view nature in its first fruits, in the infancy of its creation. Prior to the establishment of the park, men like Rundle and Thompson had given voice to this notion after experiencing in the riotous order of the mountains the supreme creative moment when God forged them. The massive development of the park between 1885 and 1930 did little to mitigate the propensity of Banff visitors (and promoters) to champion the park as a primeval place. Indeed, even after the founding of mines, the townsite, the many and diverse attractions, and the miles upon miles of roadways, the promotion of the park as a sanctuary of the primitive and untouched persisted. A National Parks Service brochure from as late as 1930 is typical: "Diverse in character and varied in purpose, [the national parks] conserve the original wild life of Canada under natural conditions, help maintain the primitive beauty of the landscape, and preserve sites memorable in the nation's history."[260] In the same year, two park visitors expressed the same sensibility this way: "Here is wilderness. Here you are still, in a sense, at the beginning of things, though a railway and a motor-road twist through."[261] The idea advanced by government publications of Banff as a "museum of primitive America," as one writer put it, was echoed in the words of park visitors.[262] Writing in *The Canadian Magazine*, Betty Thornley presented Banff as a world "older than Time":

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[260] National Parks Service, *Playgrounds of the Prairies* (Ottawa: National Parks Service, 1930), i.

[261] Frederick John Niven and John Innes, *Canada West* (London and Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1930), 95.

[262] Buckley, 210.

> This new world into which the road has bored its way is a world older than Time, yet, in some vivid and tremendous fashion, still unfinished. That scarred skyline seems as though it might break in a black wave and sweep down on life as we know it, with the crash of suns–surely nothing so vital, so full of power, could be fixed forever–done. These huge creatures of granite and snow that crouch together above the tiny track, these mountains in among whom you've dared to come–you've never seen so many together, so close–herds of mountains, one behind the other, looking over each other's shoulders, enormous, inert, yet–alive. . . . You feel as though you've slipped through the hole in the wall–gone into the land where we only go in dreams.[263]

Here the rhetoric of enchantment–"herds of mountains ... alive"–is married to a powerful romantic nostalgia to define Banff as a pre-temporal dreamscape untouched by the corrosive realities of Modernism. This is nature presented as a primeval Temple, a place somehow protected from the ideology of man infinite, the embodiment of a sacred time utterly distinct from the profane progressivism of emergent metropolitan Canada.

One detects in this rhetoric something of the Stoneys' sense of the Sundance ritual as a re-enactment of the cosmogony, a return from a wearied world-year to the potency and life of creation's creation. But whereas for the Stoneys the consciousness of the divine saturated apprehensions of nature, for Victorian English-Canadians, the universe was an increasingly disenchanted place, stripped of its mystery by the dramatic progress of science in understanding, and technology in subduing, the natural world. This foundational distinction shaped temporal consciousness in distinct ways. The twin polarities of the Stoneys' experience of time were the sacred and the profane, the former experienced during periods or rituals–like the Sun dance–associated with divine revelation. In the culture of Victorian English-Canadians, the two ends of the spectrum of temporal consciousness were not understood primarily as the sacred and the profane, but rather as the leisurely and the employed, the inspirational and the diurnal. This new conception reflects the difference between a culture in which the human being is understood as a *homo religiousus* and one in which the individual exists as a *homo economicus*. Thus, just as the liturgical year of the Stoneys alternated between periods of the sacred and the profane, so too the economic calendar of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English-Canadian cycled through times of leisure and others of work. And just as the experience of sacred time, the immersion in the fundamentally different reality of the "eternal present," was understood by the Stoneys as essential to the very continuation of existence, so too the leisurely vacation, the escape from the mind-numbing regularity of the everyday, was seen by English-Canadians as fundamental to the quality of one's life. CPR promotional literature claimed that "... it is becoming more and more apparent that some holiday of rest and relaxation–call it by the good old-fashioned name of holiday if you like–is rapidly becoming one of the essentials of our exciting twentieth-century existence. What was once a question of caprice and luxury is now a necessity, if the danger of a breakdown is to be avoided... ."[264] A commentator on vacations in Canada's national parks put it this way: "The secret of a good holiday isn't the length of it on the calendar or the width away from home. Nor is it the expensiveness, though many people seem to think so, particularly when they haven't got the price. The secret of a good holiday is its differentness from ordinary life–the way it lets us out of being *us*."[265] The need to escape from the "profane" time of the strictly scheduled working life and enter into the "sacred" time of the leisurely holiday–particularly in the wild nature of places like the national parks–was viewed by some as urgently necessary:

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[263] Thornley, 102-03.

> The late Professor Carleton Parker stated that our crass ignorance of the relation of industry to crime, feeble-mindedness, functional insanity and other physical disorders can be traced back to our refusal to see that economics is *social* economics and that a

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[264] Hart, *The Selling of Canada*, back cover.

[265] Thornley, 97.

> full knowledge of the needs and habits of man and particularly his psychological demands, is an absolute pre-requisite to clear and purposeful thinking on our industrial civilization. At a time when the whole economic structure is shaken with unrest and rebellion the establishment of national reserves, where worn and worried minds may find peace and upbuilding in contact with nature, is a greater contribution to economic peace than the unthinking we have begun to realize.[266]

But as this remark makes clear, much of English-Canada's emphasis on leisure remained rooted in utilitarian considerations like the "economic peace" of the nation. Indeed, the idea of Banff as a realm in which to encounter a fundamentally different order of time–vacation time–was inescapably wed to a basically utilitarian image of the human being; Josef Pieper, the great scholar of leisure and its relation to culture, articulates it this way: "Leisure stands opposed to the exclusive ideal of work *qua* social function. A break in one's work, whether of an hour, a day or a week, is still part of the world of work. It is a link in the chain of utilitarian functions. The pause is made for the sake of work and in order to work, and a man is not only refreshed *from* work but *for* work."[267] According to this ideology, the workers' annual vacation, that most sacred of times, cleanses them of the weariness and stress of the preceding months and prepares them for the work of the year to come.

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[266] Buckley, 211-12.

[267] Josef Pieper, *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*, trans. Alexander Dru (New York: New American Library, 1963), 43.

Conclusion

The history of Banff between 1800 and 1930 bears witness to several prominent trends in the history of the Canadian West. The establishment of the Rocky Mountains Park represents both the symbolic and quite literal overthrow of a premodern, essentially religious sensibility of place by a modern conception drawing from multiple sources of moral meaning. The history of the Banff region during this period offers significant insights into the relationship between the religious, utilitarian, and romantic modalities of consciousness. During the early to mid-nineteenth century, the Stoneys apprehended the area as a sacred cosmos, a world in which theophanies defined their spatial, temporal, and existential understanding. All forms of apprehending nature–whether aesthetic or rational, mystic or utilitarian–were subsumed under a religious aegis. The profoundly– indeed, at its heart, singularly–religious vision of the Stoneys exists in contrast with the more diverse perspectives of English-Canadians who came to dominate the region in the late nineteenth century. Like the Stoneys, many of the pre-Confederation visitors to Banff manifested a religious modality of consciousness, though their particular experiences were shaped by both the western legacy of dualism and the burgeoning of rationalist and romantic forms of apprehension that existed in uncertain relationship with–indeed, challenged–traditional religious conceptions of the world. In the period following Confederation, these rationalist and romantic currents would grow in significance and become central to cultural understanding in a modernizing, secularizing Canada. The utilitarian logic that re-imagined and ultimately refigured the wasted wilderness as profitable scenery and national park testifies to the significance of rational, scientific traditions in the Canadian imagination. The romantic vision of nature challenged the utilitarian and metropolitan ethos, but also supported that vision by participating in the commodification of nature and the consignment of wilderness and Native peoples to a nostalgic past. Taken together, the cultural sensibilities evident in the early history of the park–including utilitarian arguments about political and economic efficacy and romantic visions of the restorative powers of nature–all speak to the burgeoning of a modern vision in Canada by reflecting the opening of multiple sources of moral meaning, multiple reservoirs of value and sensibility, in the nation. These currents continue to inform and animate the Canadian perspective upon nature in the ways in which we think about Native rights to hunt and fish, sustainable economic development, and the spiritual value of the natural world. Although we grapple with these issues in ways particular to our cultural moment, the reflexive nature of the relationship between nature and culture remains consistent. We continue to define–and be defined by–the natural world.

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